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FAA Avenger • RAF S.E.5 • Bf 109G-14

A-12 Avenger II • Vickers Valiant

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Fw 190A-5

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Offz. Walter KÖHNE, 1./JG 1, Deelen, Netherlands, July 1943.



Hptm. Egon MAYER, commander of III./JG 2 Richthofen, France, Spring 1943.



Hptm. Walter NOWOTNY, commander of I./JG 54 Grünherz, Oreil, Fall 1943.



Oblt. Rolf STROHAL, Stab I./JG 1, Deelen, Netherlands, April 1943.



Kit contains complete engine, fuselage weapons, wing MG 151 cannons, detailed landing gear and wheel wells, color photo-etched sheet with color seatbelts, optional instrument panels and other small details, optional version wings, accurate, optional open/closed canopy, canopy paint mask, four marking options.

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Yak 1b

Vladimir P. POKROVSKIY 2.GIAP SF, 1944/1945.



Alexei V. ALELYUKHIN, Flight Commander, 9.GIAP, spring 1943.



Pavel P. KARAVAI, Flight Commander, 897.IAP, 288.IAD, Winter 1942/1943.



Roland de la POYPE, GC3 Normandie, May 1943.



Yuri KUREYEV, 812.IAP, April 1944.



Nikolai A. KOZLOV, 910. IAP PVO, February 1943.



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1:72

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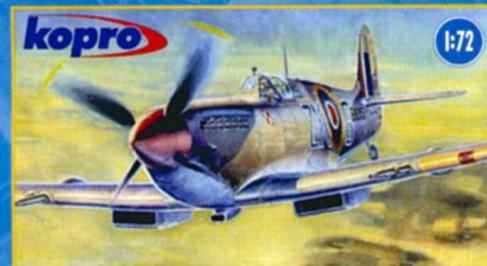
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SAMI's reviews section has evolved into a well-respected encyclopaedia of kit-building. While space precludes covering every kit received with a full review, we do aim to give a representative cross-section of the entire hobby, including samples of the numerous reboxings and reissues that make up such a large part of the market.

We are always looking for new reviewers, so anyone interested in becoming part of the team is invited to contact Gary Hatcher at the editorial address.

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Fw 200C-5/8 'Condor'

REVELL 1/72

BY TIM LARGE

Various reports have been around in the modelling press, regarding Revell's new and much anticipated 1/72nd scale Focke-Wulf Fw 200 'Condor.' Well, it's arrived (in test shot form) and it's been well worth the wait.

The kit consists of 242 parts on nine sprues, eight of which are in a light grey plastic and one clear. With the parts supplied you can make just about any Fw 200 from a C-4 to the C-8, and it looks as if Revell intend to release an early version as a separate kit.

The level of detail is very



TECHNICAL DATA

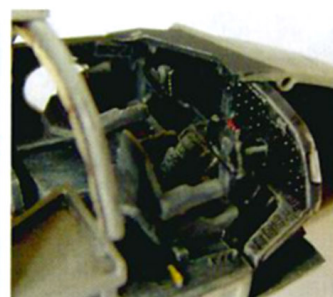
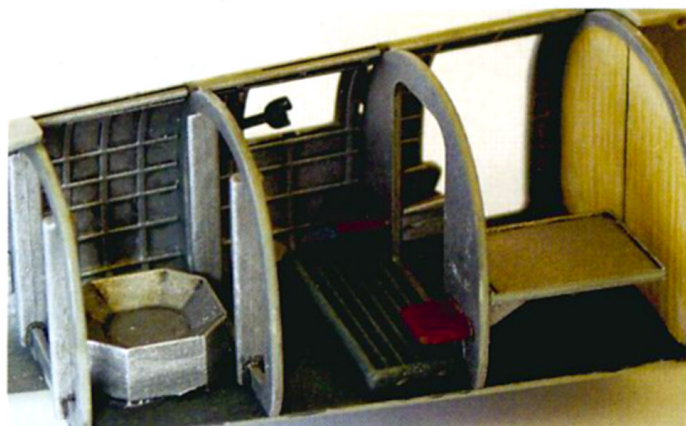
Scale: 1/72 Price: £13.99
Kit No: 04387
Type: Injection Moulded Plastic
Parts: Plastic 109, Clear 22
Manufacturer: Revell

plan with the instructions show a clear small D-15/30 turret (not supplied, but with a No 2 next to it) I imagine we will see a C-3 version at some point.



accomplished for a model of this scale, with crisp recessed panel lines on the exterior surfaces and raised detail on the inside. Revell have cleverly hidden the missing interior centre section by moulding the dividing curtains closed. Fuselage and bulkhead ribbing is provided in abundance, and this even extends to the gondola's gun positions and bomb bay.

All the clear parts are quite beautifully moulded, being thin and very clear, with the framing crisp. You are supplied, with both short (not used) and long front gondolas, and as the parts



decal/colouring guide with the test shot instructions, so I referred to my reference material - the instructions from Revell's old tool Fw 200C-4, their much newer Junkers Ju 290 and David Batt's article on the Trumpeter 1/48th scale Fw 200 C-4 (SAMI Vol 11 Iss 10 October 2005) for all the internal painting.

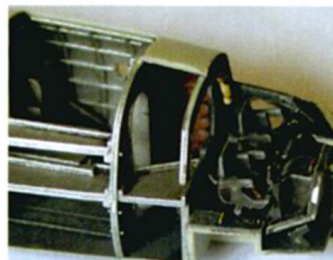
So how did it fit together, I hear you ask? Pretty damn well! The only places where filler was needed, were around the upper fuselage between the top of the cockpit and the forward HD 151 turret, as the profile here was a little too flat, and on the upper wing to fuselage joint, as the wings were a little raised on both sides.

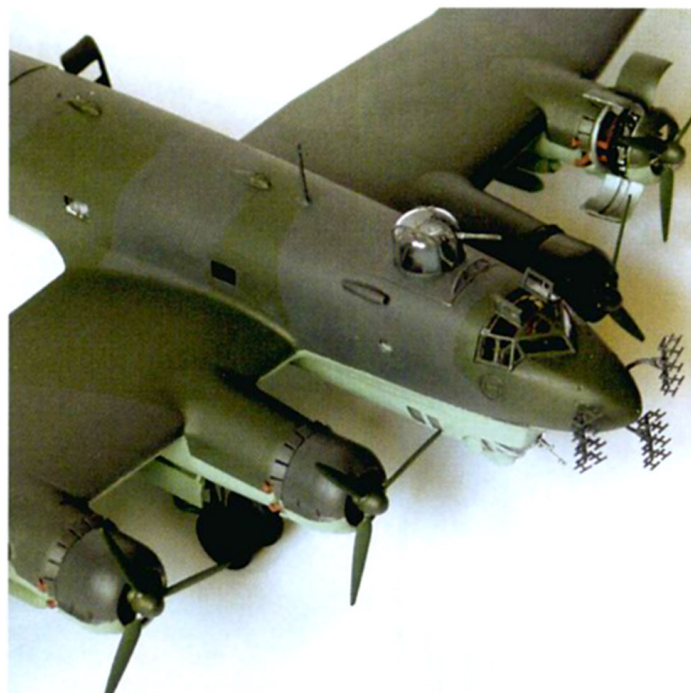
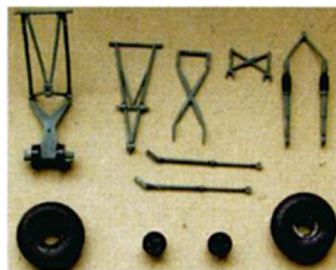
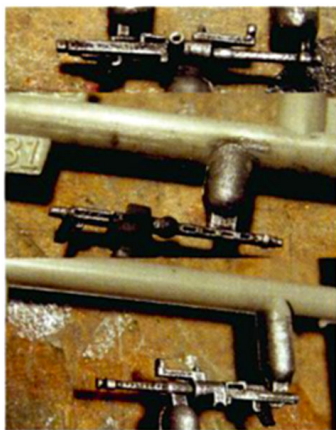
The engines are constructed in such a way that you can display the inspection panels opened or closed. They are nicely detailed if viewed from the front, however I'm not convinced



Construction

The instructions provided by Revell were to build a late C-8 version, with two under wing Henschel Hs 293 air-to-surface missiles, so the detailed bomb bay and doors were closed obviating the fitting of the six SC 500 bombs and their relevant mounting points! There was no





on the merits of showing them opened up. I feel resin replacements, if/when they become available, would be a better option. You are also given a choice of two types of exhaust, straight and fishtail, depending on the aircraft you wish to build.

The defensive armament supplied with the kit consists of four MG 15s, three MG 131s and one MG151/15, and all are up to the standard of the rest of the kit, although I did feel that the internal detail of the HD 151 turret was simplistic and lacking in accuracy.

If like me you were wondering how the complicated undercarriage would be dealt with, fear not, as once again Revell have done a superb job here. The main gear assemblies comprise 13

parts each. The bottom section of three parts is a little fiddly to fit in place, but once done, it makes for a strong mounting for the main assembly, which needed a little adjustment to fit and line up correctly.

Colour Options

None came with the instructions nor any decals, so I can't tell you what the choices will be or the quality of the decals. In the end I settled on a C-8 W/Nr 0248 F8+IR, in a finish of RLM 72 Grün over RLM 73 Grün and an underside of RLM 65 Hellblau, using Xtracolor X222, X223 and X202 respectfully, all paint through out being applied by brush, apart from the final matt coat, which was Testors' Dull Cote sprayed from the can. Decals came from the spares box.

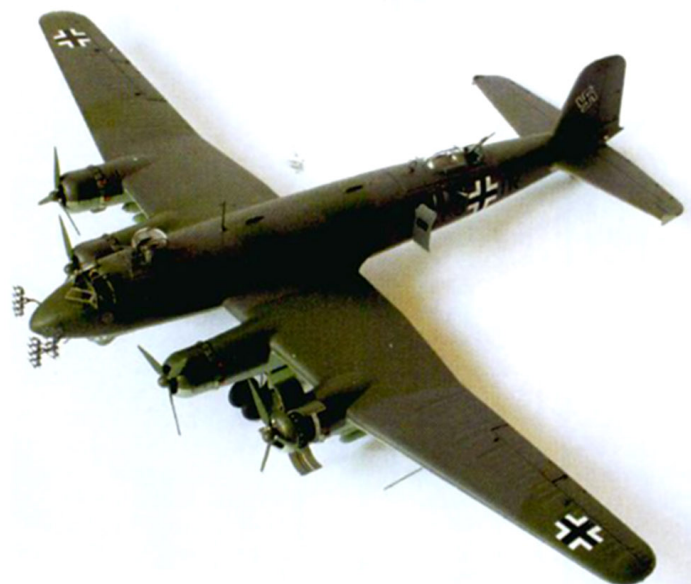
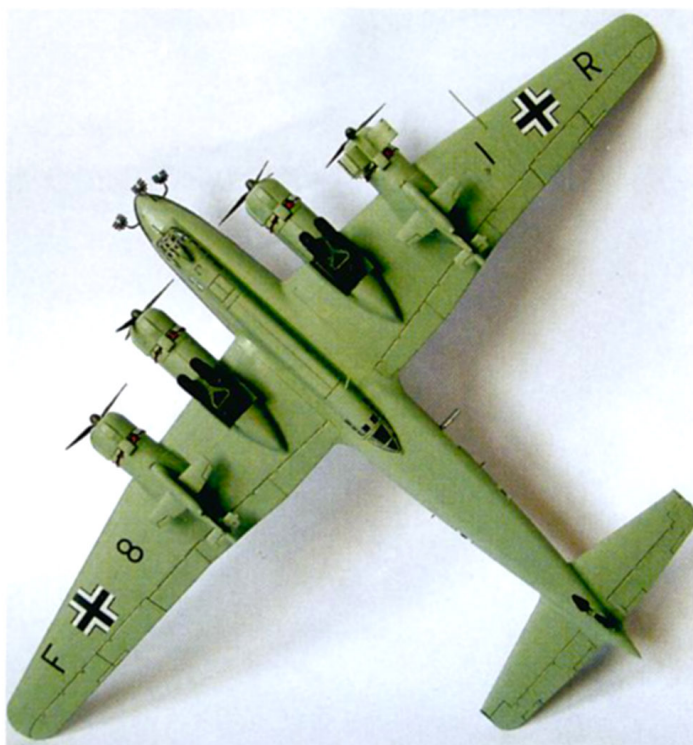
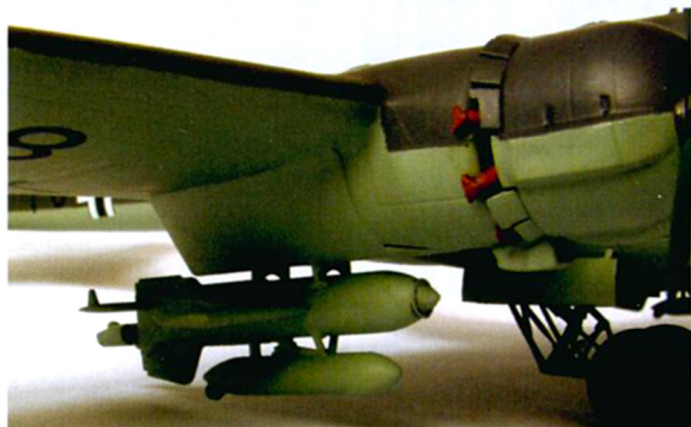
Conclusions

This is an excellent kit and what's more at a bargain price, £13.99 in the UK. How do they do it? The scope of the moulding, will allow just about any Fw 200 from the C-3 onwards to be made from the basic kit, apart from the personnel transport version, which will need some extra work with regards to

the windows and interior. I would imagine, and hope, that aftermarket manufacturers, as I write this, are making resin updates and decal sets.

I can't wait to get my hands on the production kit (already ordered from Hannants), as it looks like the best buy of the year to me.

SAM





Trumpeter's 1/32 scale Grumman TBF-1C

The first thing that strikes you on opening the box is that this is going to be a *big* model. There are 17 sprues containing over 400 parts to make up the TBF-1C. Added to this are two sheets of etched metal together with one of brass which holds the parts that you have to bend or fold. These include seatbelts, inner bomb bay doors and wing-fold covers, gunsights and engine intake grilles. The other sheet is in harder steel and contains Trumpeter's once-typical but now thankfully abandoned hinge pins for the positionable control surfaces, plus levers and trim wheels for the cockpit. Finally, contained in a separate box are the clear parts, including a one-piece turret and an instrument panel.

Topping it off is a set of tyres that appear to be moulded in a type of plastic rather than the previously used rubber.

The detail on all the parts is a mixture of recessed and raised which gives a good representation of the surface of the full-size aircraft. Internally the kit is very well detailed and benefits from careful painting, as most will be visible on the completed model. There are a few ejector pin marks, but most are well hidden from the eye and the few that are not are easy to fill with either a punched disc of plastic or typewriter correction fluid, depending on their depth.

Due to its complicated shape there are also four mould seams on the engine cowling, but using Micromesh sanding sticks it took me less than three minutes to polish these out.

Navy Blue Part 5

Avenger

aftermarket boys. The other minor error is on the TBM-1, which is supplied with the zero-length rocket stubs of the later model rather than the correct British-style rail launchers. See below for how I corrected this.

To complete this model it is essential to have good reference material, as one surprising omission is the lack of a colour guide, though Gunze Sanyo paint codes are given on the instructions. I would recommend either Detail & Scale Vol 53 or the Squadron/Signal Walk Around, both of which are currently available.

So, my first impressions were very good and this looked to be one of my favourite types of kits — loads of nice detail to paint, combined with easy construction. However, there are some changes from the kit's suggested build sequence that will make the job a lot easier, so read on.

Construction

We start with the engine, and to say this is complete is a bit of an understatement. With over 70 components this has to be the most complete radial engine I have ever assembled!

Starting with the back of the engine you have the accessory pack made up from 20+ parts which includes an etched metal throttle lever. The exhaust

system is made up from a further 20 parts which I painted in a mix of gunmetal and dark brown before attaching the individual pipes to the engine. The completed rear engine components are attached to a firewall and this assembly is now secured to the engine bay bulkhead, complete with its separate oil tanks, via four engine bearers. I chose to assemble and paint all of this, but unless you are planning on opening up some panels on the cowl and engine bay it is all completely invisible on the finished model. At least I know it's there!

The front part of the engine is made up of four-part engine cylinders to which you add separate rocker covers and pushrods. I painted my engine with Alclad dark aluminium and the separate gearbox cover in a dark grey before applying a wash of black acrylic thinned with soapy water. The soapy water is important, as it breaks down surface tension and helps the paint to settle in recessed detail. The final touch was to add an ignition harness from coloured black wire and a small rating plate to the side of the gearbox from spare decal stock.

I was so impressed with the contents of this kit that I went out and purchased the later TBM-3 version, so I will now give you a brief comparison of the two kits.

The main difference between a TBF-1 and TBM-3 is the engine cowl, and these are correctly represented for each version with alternative brass grilles supplied on the universal brass sheet. Another change is the instrument panel, the earlier models having a curved top and different layout from later versions, and once again Trumpeter have got it right. Strangely, the things they have got wrong also affect the smaller Accurate Miniatures kit: on the later TBM models the propeller blades were wider in chord. To correctly represent this you will need to raid a Hasegawa Hellcat, or wait for the





The only way to wash the large parts was to fill the bath with plastic and washing-up liquid. Yes, my wife was out!



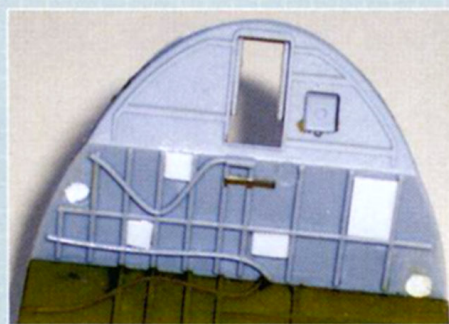
The completed instrument panel. Note use of old decals to improve its appearance



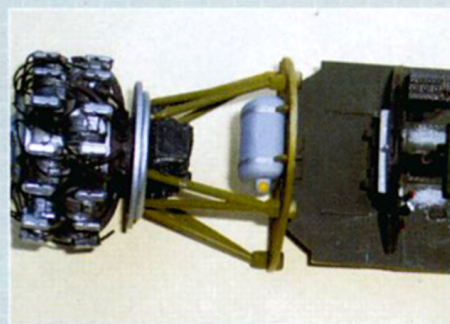
Wiring up the engine with coloured wire was a big job



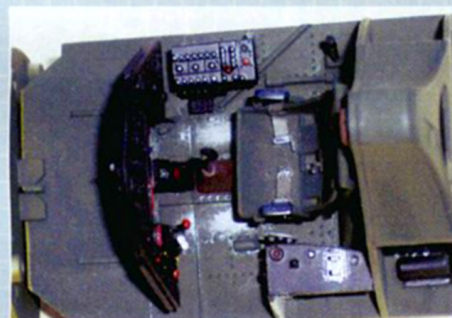
To hide the join on the radio I used a small rectangle of plasticard



More plasticard hid the few injector pin marks that were in obvious places



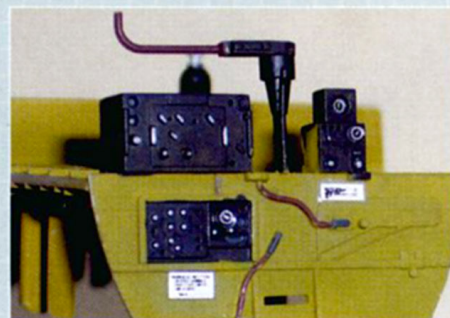
Completed engine and cockpit section. Most of the detail to the rear of the engine is invisible in the assembled model



Wear and tear simulated using CMK's aluminium weathering powder



Completed rear bulkhead and radio bay



Radio compartment with added decals

Now attention turned to the cockpit and bomb bay, which are just as complete as the engine area but with most being visible these areas need careful painting. And there is an important point to note here in that two distinct interior colour schemes were used on early Avengers depending on who produced the airframe. TBF Avengers were produced by Grumman and were painted with a Bronze-Green cockpit and radio bay with Interior Green in the rear compartment and bomb bay, while the interior of the engine cowling was painted in a shade of grey. Later TBMs built by General Motors' Eastern Division featured Interior Green throughout all inner surfaces.

As I was building a Grumman aircraft I started by painting the fuselage halves in Interior Green before masking off the Bronze-Green areas. For this colour I used Humbrol 75, which is good match, and as the airbrush was loaded I also sprayed all the other parts on the sprues that were

to be this darker internal colour.

I now started cockpit construction with the instrument panel, which is moulded in clear plastic that needs painting black. Behind the panel is placed a photographic film, the back of which must be painted white to allow the dial detail to stand out. A number of metal levers have to be added to the instrument panel, throttle box and side consoles. These are on the steel sheet which is very hard to cut and prone to springing the part off into the dark parts of the workshop or straight into your eyes, so care is needed here. Once superglued to the panels I applied small blobs of thick glue with a toothpick to their ends to form knobs which were then painted in red, yellow or white to match photographs of the real aeroplane. I resorted to my decal spares box to find script in white and red to make up warning placards that were liberally scattered around the cockpit. The radio bay is another area that received decal placards, as well as

some white and blue coloured wire to add interest.

I now moved onto the bomb bay, which is well detailed out of the box, but those who like superdetailing can really go to town in here. I settled for running a couple of extra coloured wires from frame to frame. A choice of weapons is supplied: a mix of 250- and 500-pound bombs, a torpedo with the late-style 'ring' tail, or a long-range fuel tank — that was my choice.

To make painting easier I really did not want to follow the kit's instructions and attach the protruding bomb bay door arms and weapons load at this stage. A test fit confirmed that it would be possible to attach them after the fuselage had been fully assembled.

Another area item that could be left off until later was the gun turret. If you follow the instructions this would be assembled and fitted before joining the two fuselage halves, and that would make painting interesting. A far better way is to attach the gun ring support

to the fuselage as instructed, but do not fit the radio shelf immediately behind the turret to the radio compartment bulkhead.

The turret itself is gem of a model in its own right, made up from 30 parts to which the only alteration I made was to remove the end of gun barrel and replace it with small piece of brass tubing for a more realistic look. Once completed the gun turret was put aside for later installation.

The final stage before joining the fuselage halves was to assemble the rear bulkhead and bomb aimer's compartment. Once again I deviated from the instructions by fitting the bomb aimer's seat in the raised position against the fuselage wall. Fortunately Trumpeter have moulded detail on the underside of the seat as well as the top. Once again to make painting easier I found it was possible to attach the tailwheel after the fuselage had been assembled and painted.

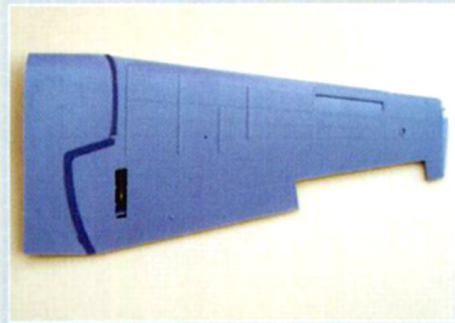
Now for the part I had not been



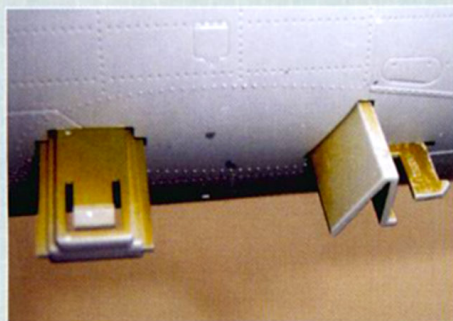
Four mould seams needed to be removed from the engine cowling



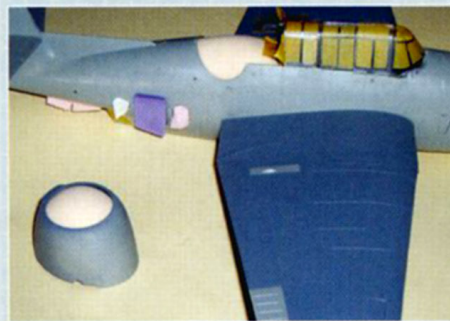
Completed wing gun, but again most of it would be invisible when installed



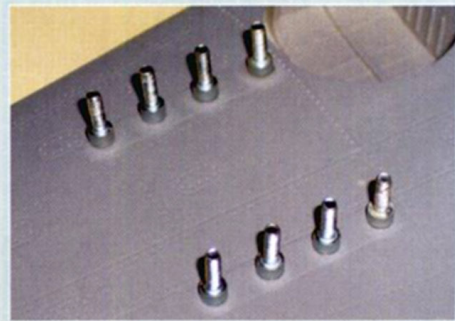
The brass covers are best installed before you assemble the wing



Self-locking spars make for a strong join and tight fit but prevent test-fitting



Make-up sponges used to fill holes on the model prior to painting. Yes, my wife was out again!



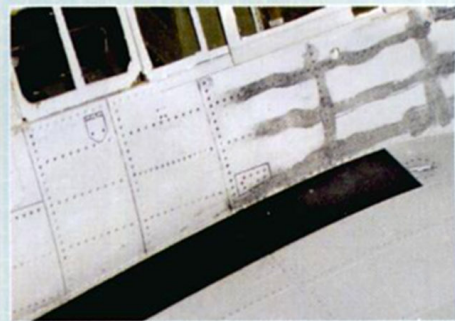
Small screws used to make the English rocket rails



It is possible to spread the fuselage wall slightly without breaking the join



It's in! Note that the retaining plate and rear radio bay cover have still to be fitted

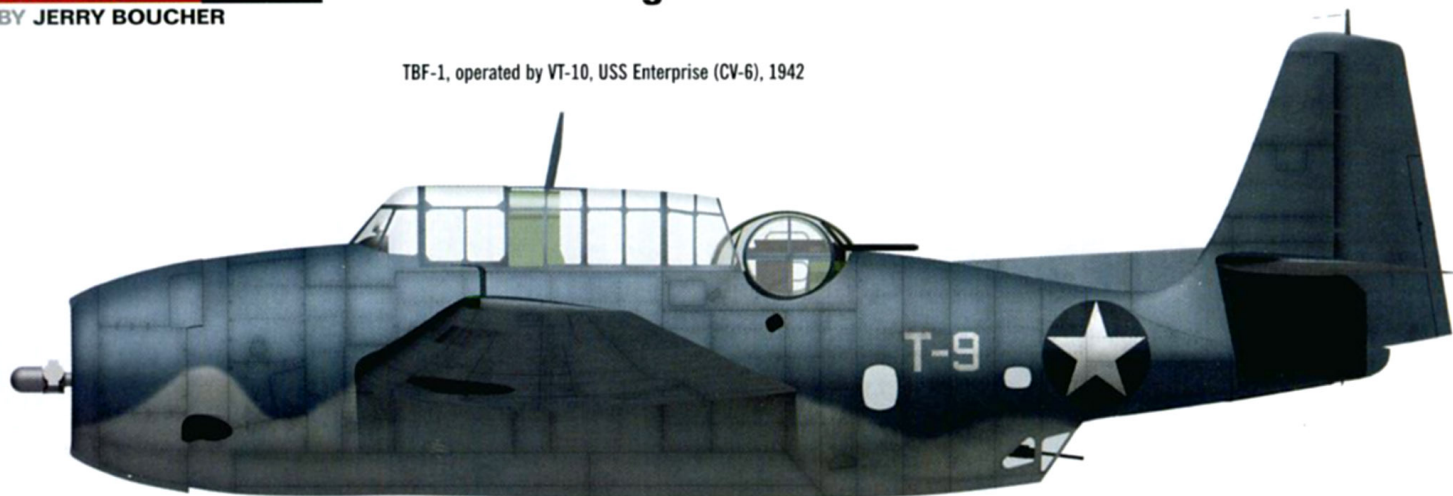


Looking messy, the chalk wash goes on...

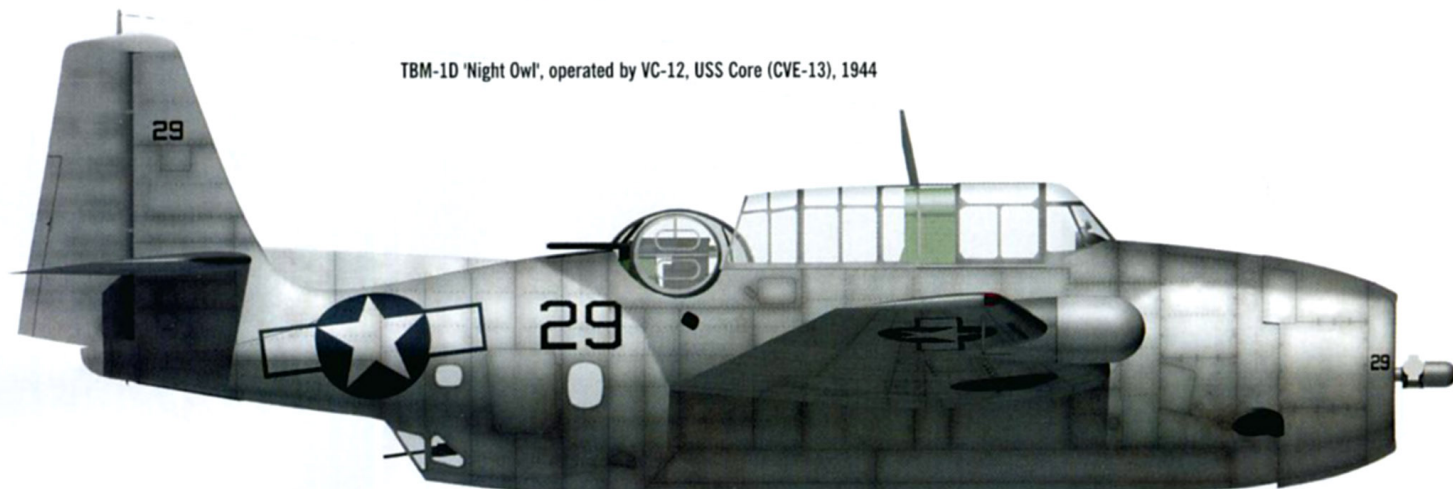


Grumman Avenger

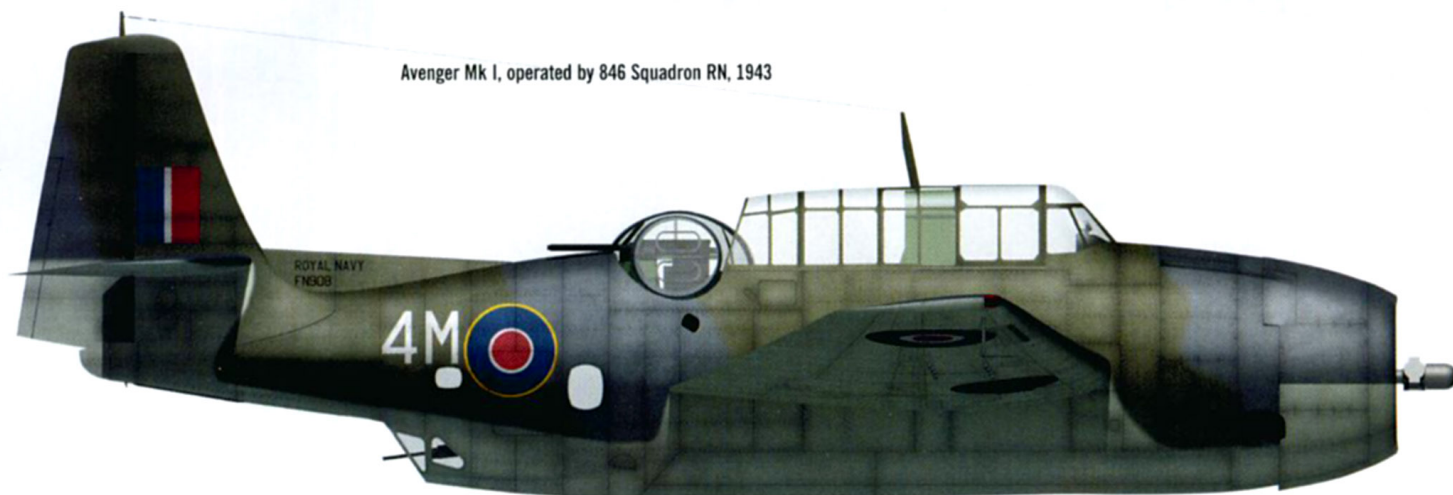
TBF-1, operated by VT-10, USS Enterprise (CV-6), 1942



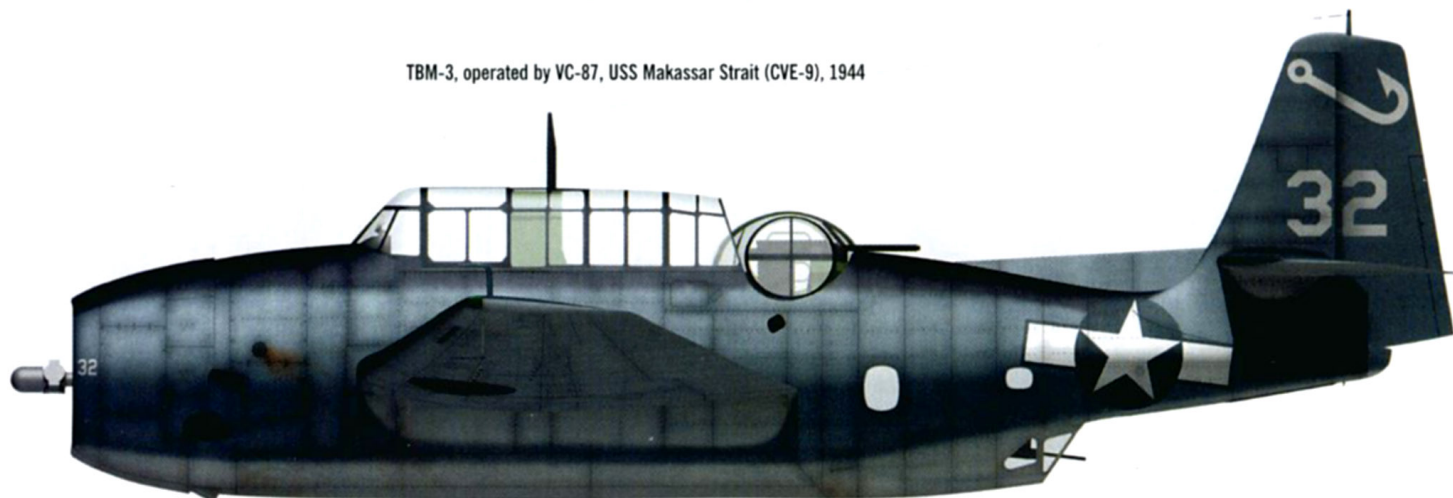
TBM-1D 'Night Owl', operated by VC-12, USS Core (CVE-13), 1944



Avenger Mk I, operated by 846 Squadron RN, 1943

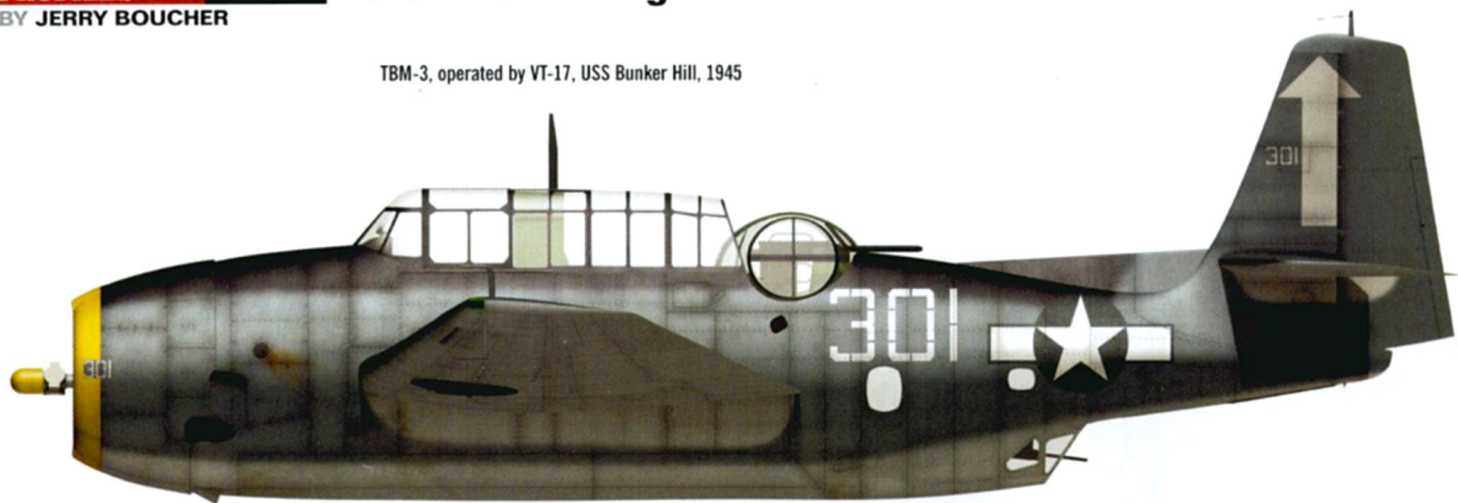


TBM-3, operated by VC-87, USS Makassar Strait (CVE-9), 1944

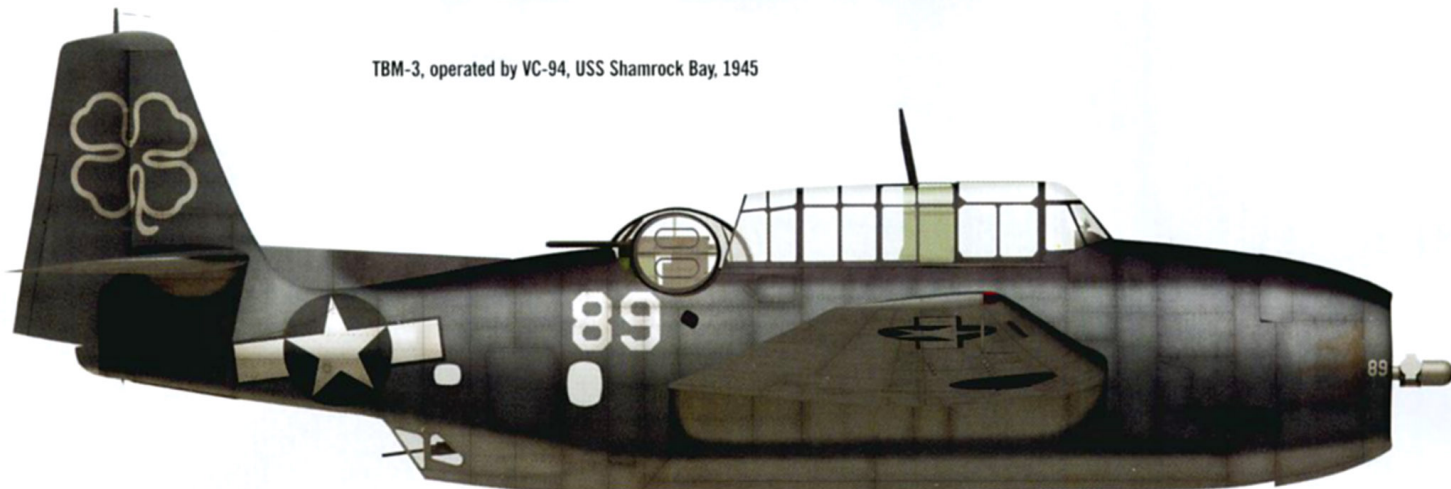


Grumman Avenger

TBM-3, operated by VT-17, USS Bunker Hill, 1945



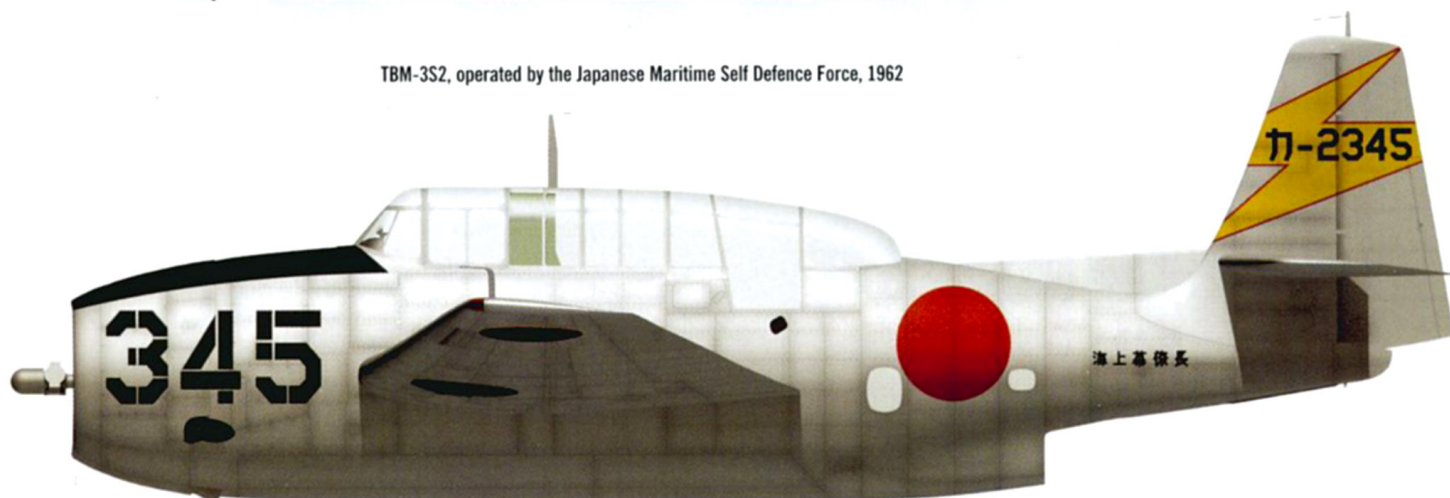
TBM-3, operated by VC-94, USS Shamrock Bay, 1945



TBM-3U, operated by VU-7, 1949. This aircraft was modified for towing targets

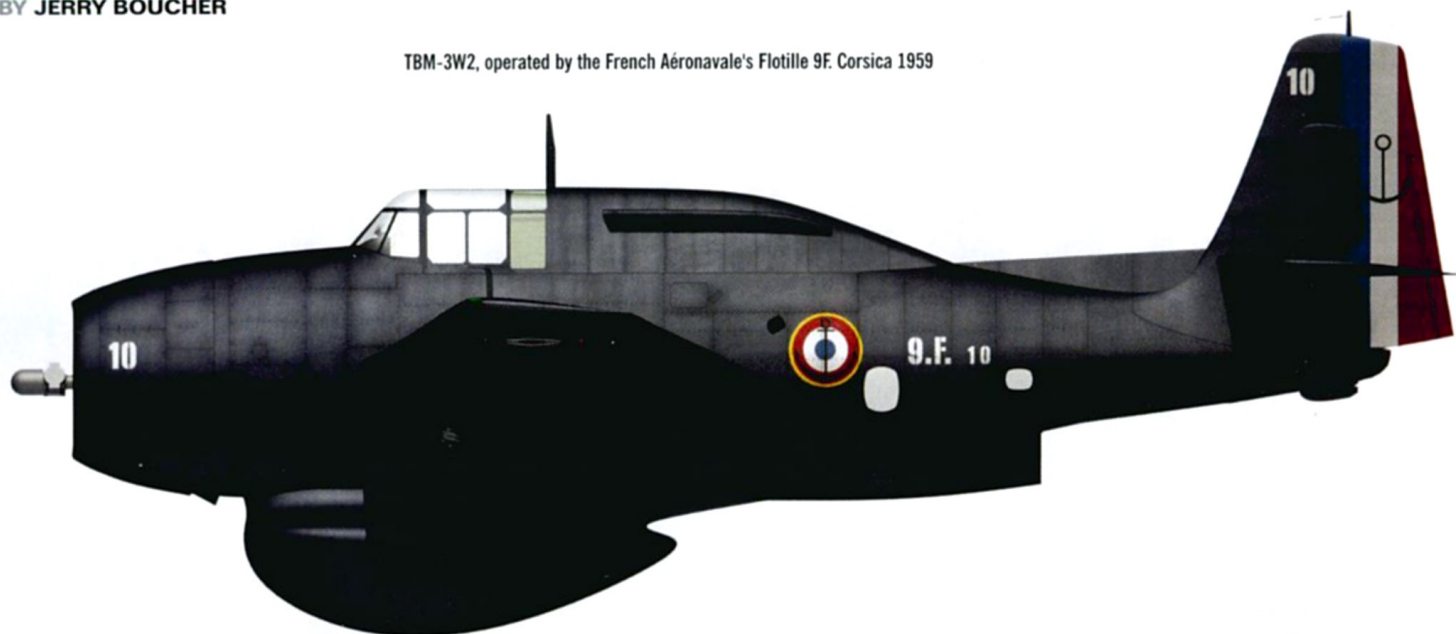


TBM-3S2, operated by the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, 1962

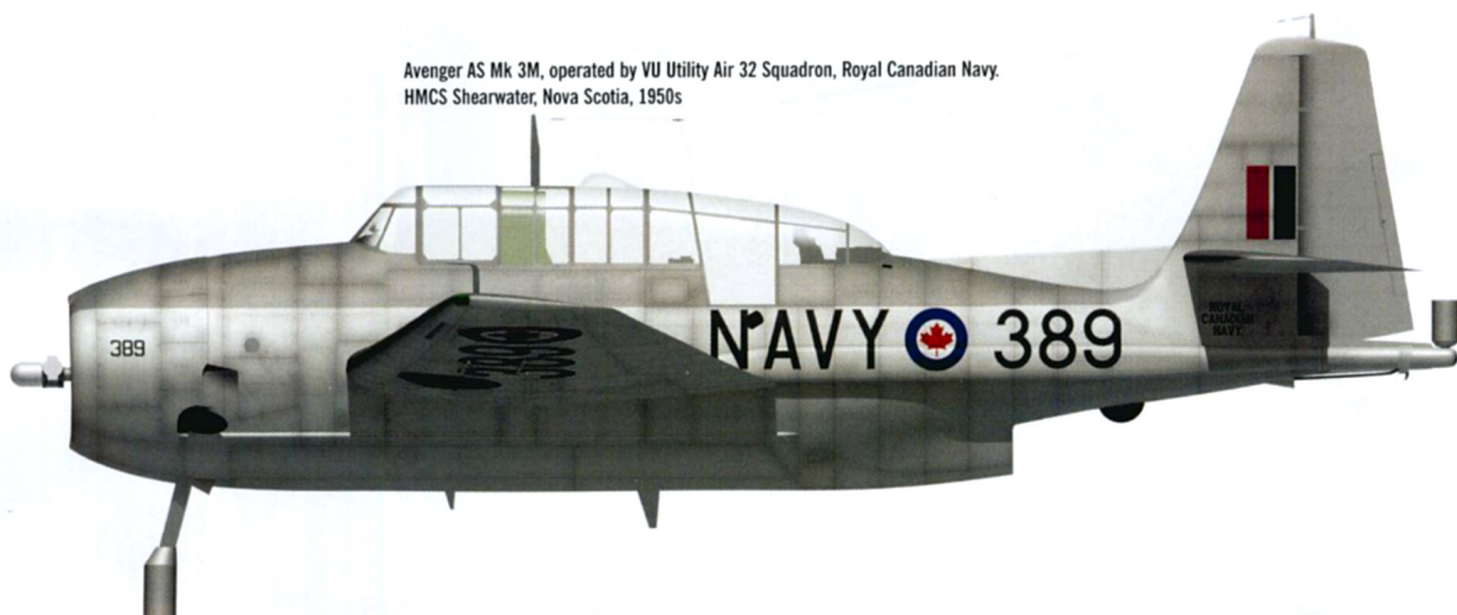


Grumman Avenger

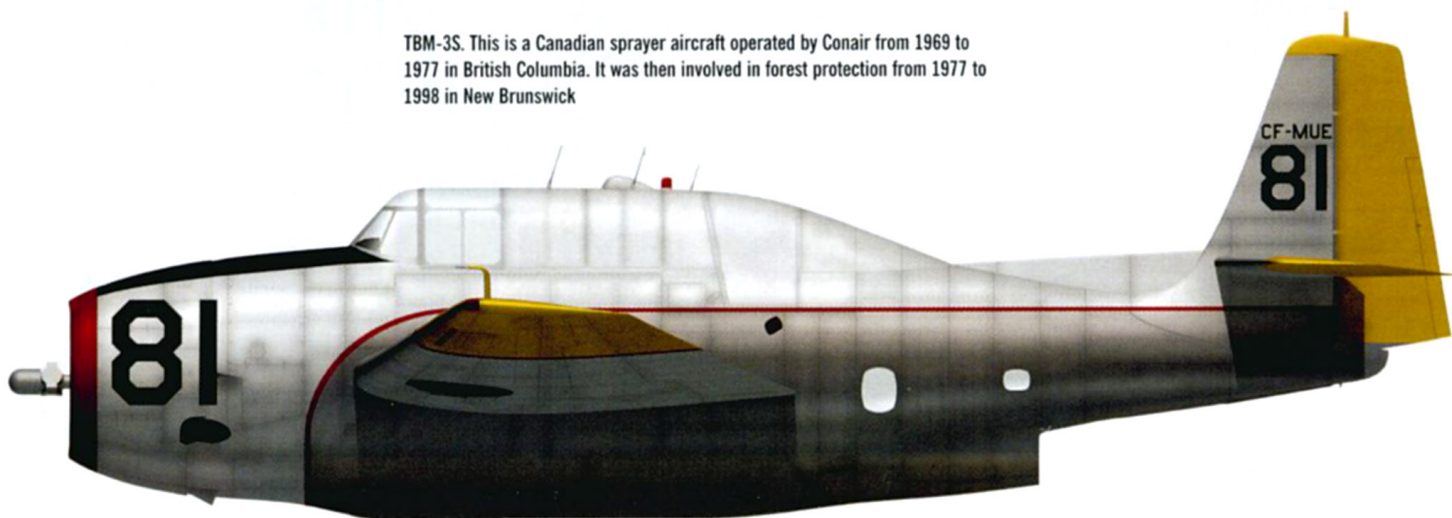
TBM-3W2, operated by the French Aéronavale's Flotille 9F. Corsica 1959



Avenger AS Mk 3M, operated by VU Utility Air 32 Squadron, Royal Canadian Navy.
HMCS Shearwater, Nova Scotia, 1950s



TBM-3S. This is a Canadian sprayer aircraft operated by Conair from 1969 to 1977 in British Columbia. It was then involved in forest protection from 1977 to 1998 in New Brunswick





Chalk wash is effective on the white rear fuselage



...but removing the wash leaves this nice effect



Half the wash has been removed here. It took less than half-an-hour to do the whole model

looking forward to at all: trying to close-up the fuselage halves around all the subassemblies. In fact it was easy and painless. First I attached the bomb bay/cockpit to one fuselage half. It is held in the correct position by a spar on the bomb bay roof. I had to remove a small amount from one sidewall to get a good fit. Another spar was now positioned and click-locked into place. Finally, the forward bulkhead engine bay was positioned along with the rear bulkhead, and once the glue had dried I was ready to join the fuselage. The fit was very good and everything lined up beautifully, so I just flowed some liquid cement into the join and held the fuselage closed with strips of masking tape until it had cured. Only a small amount of typewriter correction fluid was needed to tidy up the join before I turned to the tail surfaces.

All control surfaces on wings and tail are separate, held in place by metal hinges and pins. I dislike this system and prefer to superglue items like the rudders and ailerons at a slightly deflected angle. This is exactly what I did for the tail surfaces, then attached them to the fuselage. The fit was exceptional, needing just a small amount of PVA on the joints.

Now it was time to deal with the most complicated part of the kit: — the wings. In addition to separate control surfaces you also get separate flaps and wing folds. The typically Grumman wingfold has the wing rotate through 90° and fold back against the fuselage.



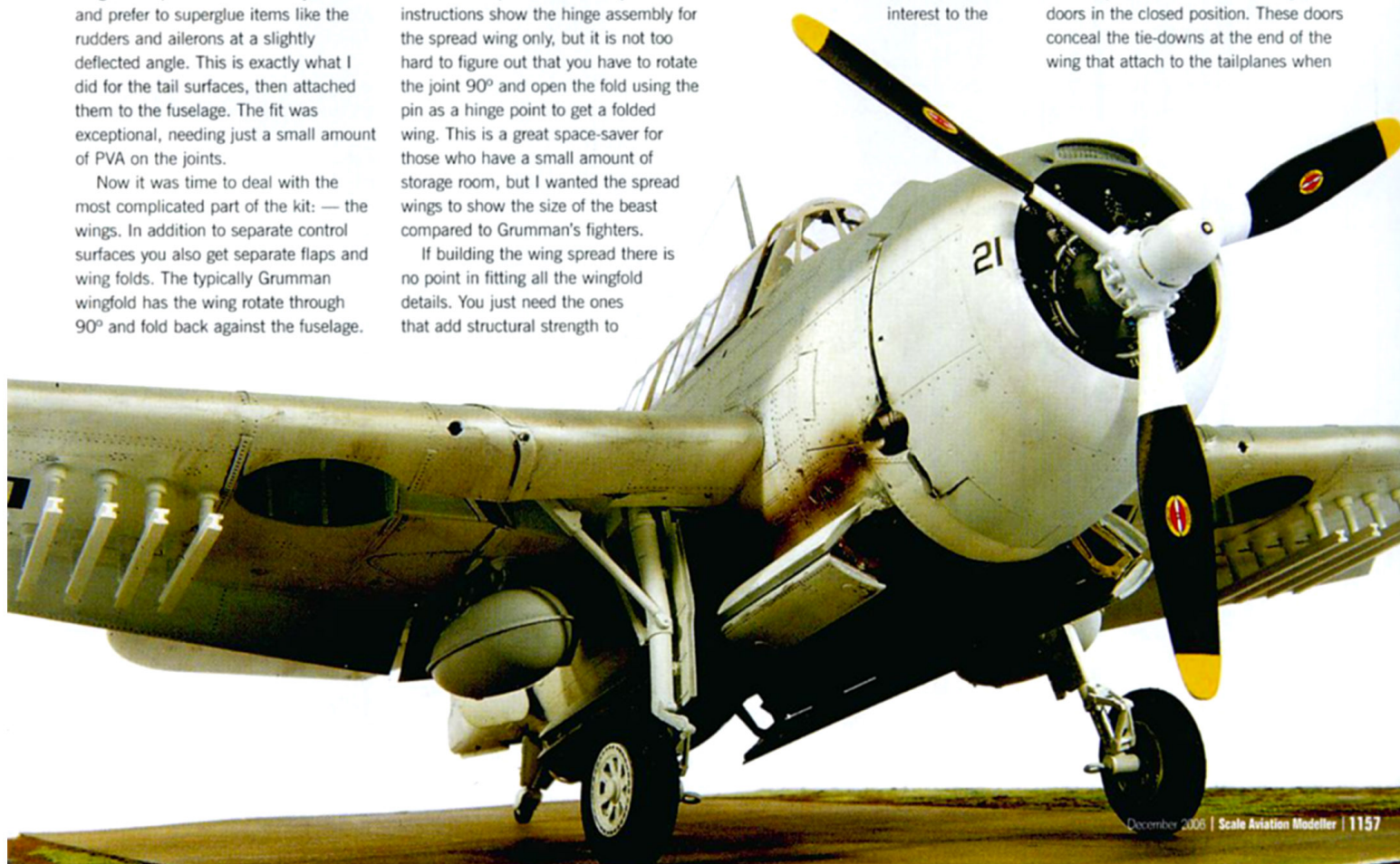
This design was first used on the Wildcat and later on the Hellcat. In this kit Trumpeter have engineered it in such a way that you can choose to fit the wing either folded or spread. To achieve this there is two-part joint made from a stronger black plastic and reinforced with a metal pin. Unfortunately the instructions show the hinge assembly for the spread wing only, but it is not too hard to figure out that you have to rotate the joint 90° and open the fold using the pin as a hinge point to get a folded wing. This is a great space-saver for those who have a small amount of storage room, but I wanted the spread wings to show the size of the beast compared to Grumman's fighters.

If building the wing spread there is no point in fitting all the wingfold details. You just need the ones that add structural strength to

the join. I started by adding the brass wingfold covers to the top surfaces of the wings. These are a great aid when it comes to joining up the inner and outer wing parts. Now you add the undercarriage bay sidewalls and gun bays. These are nice little mouldings that add a bit of interest to the

wing area, and while I do not normally leave gun bays open on my models I thought it looked so good that I did so on one wing of this one.

The way I assembled the wing was to place the two lower surfaces on the workbench and then attach the wing hinge piece with thick superglue which was slow enough to cure to give some adjustment time. Next the inner part of the top wing was attached, followed by the outer part. Once the glue had dried the wings were ready to attach to the fuselage, but a word of warning — do not try and test-fit the wing first! On the ends of the wing spars are two catches. Once the wing is slid over them they lock firmly in place and it is very hard to remove them again. This is not a bad thing as it makes the wing joint very firm, but it does help if you have glue on the joining face first. I did not, so I had to flow liquid cement into the join with a small brush. To complete the wing assembly I attached the little wingtip doors in the closed position. These doors conceal the tie-downs at the end of the wing that attach to the tailplanes when





the wings are folded.

It was at this point I decided to modify the rocket stubs to the British-style rails used on the early Avengers. The rails were attached to the wings by threaded poles. To represent these I used some small screws superglued to the wing using the holes for the kits parts as a guide. To complete the rail I used some H-shaped Plastrut glued to the ends of the screws. Not 100% accurate I know but it certainly looks better than the stub launchers supplied.

Painting, decalling and final fitting out

The kit's decals offer two alternatives:

- 1. *White 95 of VT-2 flying off USS Hornet in 1944.* Finished in the attractive tri-colour scheme of white, Intermediate Blue and Dark Blue. This aircraft also carries an impressive bomb tally under the cockpit on the starboard side.
- 2. *Black 21 of VC-42 flying of the USS Bogue.* This option is in the rarer North Atlantic scheme of Dark Gull Gray over white, with the latter carried onto the propeller blades.

My choice was the North Atlantic scheme, as I thought it unlikely that I would be able to have another aircraft in this scheme in my 'Navy Blue' collection. On the Avenger there are lots of windows and holes that need filling before painting can start. The transparencies were masked with Tamiya



tape cut to shape with a new scalpel blade.

This was quite a complicated undertaking, especially on the rear turret, and it took a steady hand and good lighting to complete satisfactorily. On the fuselage, most holes for windows and doors were filled with make-up sponges, which are available in a number of different sizes and usefully expand to fill any hole into which they are placed. The main undercarriage and tailwheel bays were filled with Playdo as a cheap easy-to-remove filler, courtesy of my daughter's toy box.

A word of warning here: my kit was

covered in release agent and needed a really good clean in soapy water before starting construction. Even then, I still had some problems using acrylic paints, as 'fisheyes' formed on the surface indicating that parts were still contaminated with release agent.

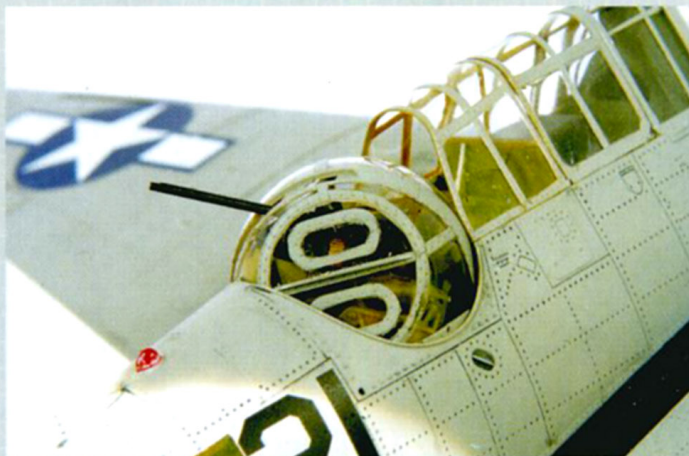
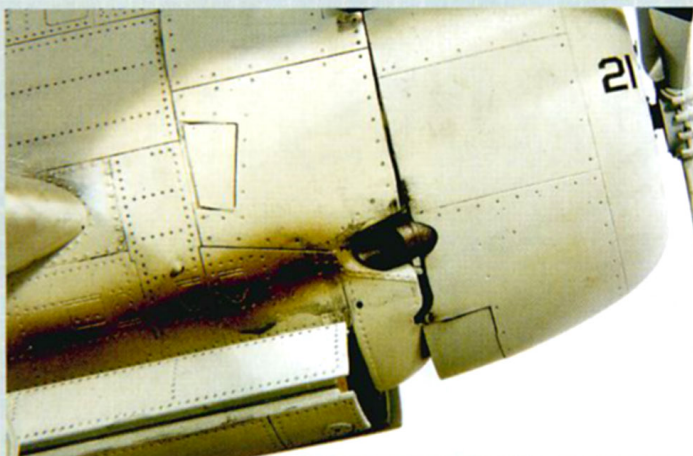
To paint the Avenger I used the Xtracrylics range, airbrushed freehand to get the soft dividing line between the colours that is evident in period photographs. Once again these paints

performed superbly and are now my first choice.

Cartograph from Italy produced the kit decals, which applied easily and settled down well with Micro Sol. The numerous stencils all are readable under magnification. My only concern was that the white on the national insignia might not be dense enough to cover the Sea Blue.

The final stage of construction began with inserting the turret into the fuselage. You need to refer to photographs to judge the angle so that





the front of the turret sits under its mounting clips, then gently put pressure on the rear until it clicks into place. Once the turret is installed you can fit the rear shelf and cockpit canopies. The bomb bay retraction jacks were now fitted along with the bay doors, which have to be assembled from a mix of plastic outer panels and etched brass inners.

The undercarriage legs are beautifully detailed, including the often-missed tie-down rings. The wheels are made up from plastic hubs to which separate tyres are fitted. I do not know exactly what material the tyres are made from, but it is a lot better than the rubber that Trumpeter have used in the past, and looks very realistic. The only drawback is that it does not stretch as much as rubber, so it was a bit of a struggle to get the tyres over the hubs.

One especially nice touch in the design of this kit is that all the windows can be inserted into their respective positions from the outside, after painting, and they fit so snugly that only a touch of PVA glue was needed to hold them in place. Finally, navigation and position lights were tinted with Tamiya clear blue and red acrylics and installed.

Weathering

On most large-scale kits I normally do not do much in the way of weathering — just some pre-shading, a light dusting with weathering powders and a little

light chipping with an aluminium pen. But this kit needed more to break up the white finish, so this was my easy technique. I used CMK Stardust weathering powders black smut and dark rust mixed with water and a big

dollop of washing up liquid to make a sludge which was applied generously to all the engraved panel lines and rivets. Then the model was put aside to dry for an hour or two. Once the sludge dried it looked awful, but using some old T-shirt material dampened with water, the excess sludge was removed by wiping in the direction of the

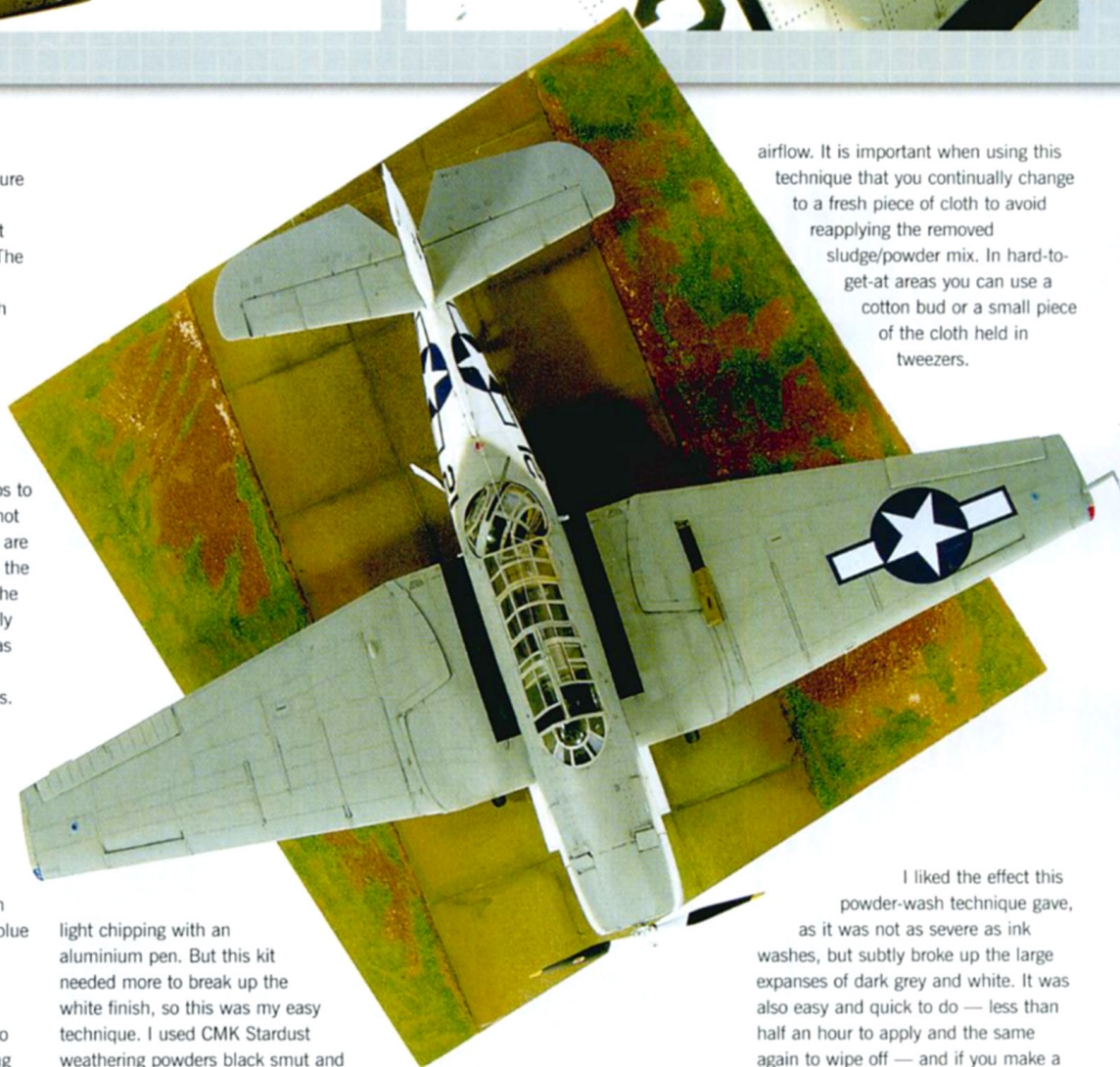
airflow. It is important when using this technique that you continually change to a fresh piece of cloth to avoid reapplying the removed sludge/powder mix. In hard-to-get-at areas you can use a cotton bud or a small piece of the cloth held in tweezers.

I liked the effect this powder-wash technique gave, as it was not as severe as ink washes, but subtly broke up the large expanses of dark grey and white. It was also easy and quick to do — less than half an hour to apply and the same again to wipe off — and if you make a mistake you can either add more sludge or apply water to remove any excess.

Conclusion

One of the best from Trumpeter. There are few areas that cause concern, indeed most of my construction time was spent on painting all the little details. If you want to try the pleasures of building in a large scale then this is a kit that I would highly recommend, and if you have a problem storing the finished model you could always use the folded wing option, which would reduce its span to not much more than that of a 1/48 scale fighter. All told, a completely pleasurable build.

SAMI



Rejuvenating an Old FROG

Gary Hatcher breathes new life into a Grumman Avenger

With the recent release of Trumpeter's epic 1/32 kit, built here by David Francis, and the reissue by Italeri of the Classic Airframes 1/48 offering for a knockdown price, it seemed that 1/72 scale was off the agenda for the Grumman Avenger. Being a fan of the scale, I had been on the lookout for a

Hasegawa kit for some time when an accidental purchase on eBay of a set of resin wheel well inserts alerted me to the possibility of actually finishing the Academy kit without leaving gaping holes in the wings. Let's face it — the Avenger's undercarriage bays are not the tidiest, and even a cursory representation of them would have taken me longer than the rest of the build in its entirety.

Of course I had a kit to hand. At £4.99, readily available in any model shop, and some post offices, who wouldn't? It's not a bad kit either. I am informed it's a reboxing of one of FROG's later releases, and if this is so then I can only rue the fact that they didn't wait longer to do the Skua and the Sea Vixen, as the engraving on the Avenger looks as good as an Italeri, Revell or indeed an Academy kit, and by no means brings to mind the kind of antiquity one usually expects to find in a kit from this era.

Tasks in Hand

There are, of course, plenty of little jobs that need doing besides the wheel wells. The moulded exhaust stubs had to be

replaced with aluminium tube, the interior was sparse to say the least, and the amount of filling and sanding that went into fairing in the ventral gun position defied belief.

I did my usual cursory job on the interior. Just enough bumps and black spots to give an impression through the glass, but no more time wasted than necessary on an area that will be only partially visible through the thick but tidy transparency. Seatbelts were added, and a similar job was done on the gun turret, but beyond this I was content to leave the interior alone.

The turret needs to be finished and painted before the fuselage is closed, then masked in situ, as the transparency cannot be attached afterwards. This done, I closed things up and turned my attention to the exhausts, which proved a simple enough rectification.

The wheel well inserts fitted perfectly, and I was overjoyed at the result. I'm not sure who made them — possibly Neomega — as they came in a plain bag with no instructions. I paid more for them than I did for the kit, but given the



Minor modifications were attended to in the turret



Masking up the canopy was a chore. The advent of Express masks gives us a lot for which to be thankful



The finished interior prior to attaching the canopy. Note that the turret was finished in Dark Slate Grey before the fuselage was joined



Aluminium tube replaces the crudely moulded exhaust stubs. This is a detail that pays far more dividends than invisible accuracy inside a sealed-up cockpit



Those wonderful, wonderful wheel wells!



A lot of hard work had to go into the ventral gun position, as the kit transparency was a dreadful fit. Next time I'll scratchbuild the frame and add glazing from PVA glue!



Filling and sanding under way, prior to the canopy being fitted



The rubber and resin wheels were a luxury, but not really necessary

amount of time it takes me to finish a model to my satisfaction, quibbling over a few pounds against a better finished result seems silly.

Colours and Markings

The best thing about using the resin inserts was that they enabled me to get on to the interesting part of the job – ploughing endlessly through Ray Sturtivant's *Squadrons of the Fleet Air Arm* trying to decide upon a colour scheme.

I had a set of old FROG decals for the kit, acquired from the IPMS decals bank at a bygone Huddersfield show, and these covered two Fleet Air Arm machines. They were thick and a bit past their sell-by date, but provided me with a starting point. I had an Eagle Strike set for East Indies machines, but I like the way the yellow and red on the C-type roundel tones with Xtracolor's Slate Grey, so in the end I decided to finish the model in Temperate Sea

Scheme with regular markings.

Initially I sprayed the model with Halford's white primer, before using Xtracolor Sky to spray along all the panel lines. A second coat filled in the gaps and allowed for a subtle pre-shaded effect. The Extra Dark Sea Grey and Dark Slate Grey were then added in the usual

fashion, with the soft demarcation to the camouflage pattern being obtained through the Blu-Tack sausage method. Decalling was a little fraught, as most of the FROG decals proved — unsurprisingly — to be unusable. I applied the serials, but the codes had to be made up from white letters and thin strips of red decal,

while all the national markings were sourced from the spares box.

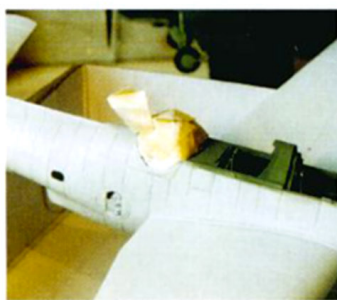
The aircraft I modelled was JZ535/7L, which was allocated to 857 Squadron in June 1944 and worked up at Quonset Point, Rhode Island, before being ferried to the UK. It spent a brief period at RAF Machrihanish before being sent on to the Far East. Informed sources suggest that the ventral gun position on FAA machines should be unarmed, as no gunner was carried, but most of the pictures that I found, certainly of aircraft operating in the US on crew training, seemed to carry a gun, so I did likewise.

All's Well That Ends Well

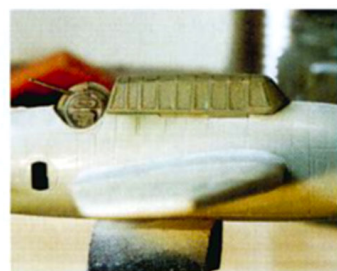
The Avenger is a remarkably large aircraft, and the FROG/Academy kit amply conveys the pot-bellied look of the prototype. For its age, and bargain price, it is a very decent kit. It wasn't an easy build — although the resin helped a lot — but the end result sits nicely alongside the Martlet and Hellcat in similar markings.

I have the Magna conversion for the turretless ASW machine, and this is high on my agenda now. Let's just hope I can find another set of wheel wells.

SAMI



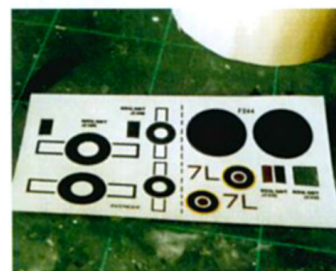
Masking up the finished turret in situ



The canopy was a poor fit, and filler was required around the windscreen



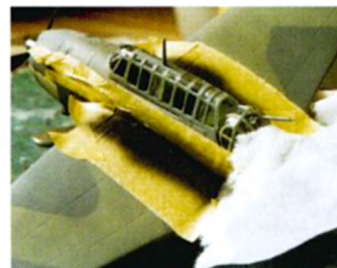
Preshading the undersides



The FROG decal sheet, courtesy of that most excellent facility, the IPMS Transfers Bank



Decals applied, the model awaits final detailing



Application of wingwalks. Painting them is always a better option than decals!

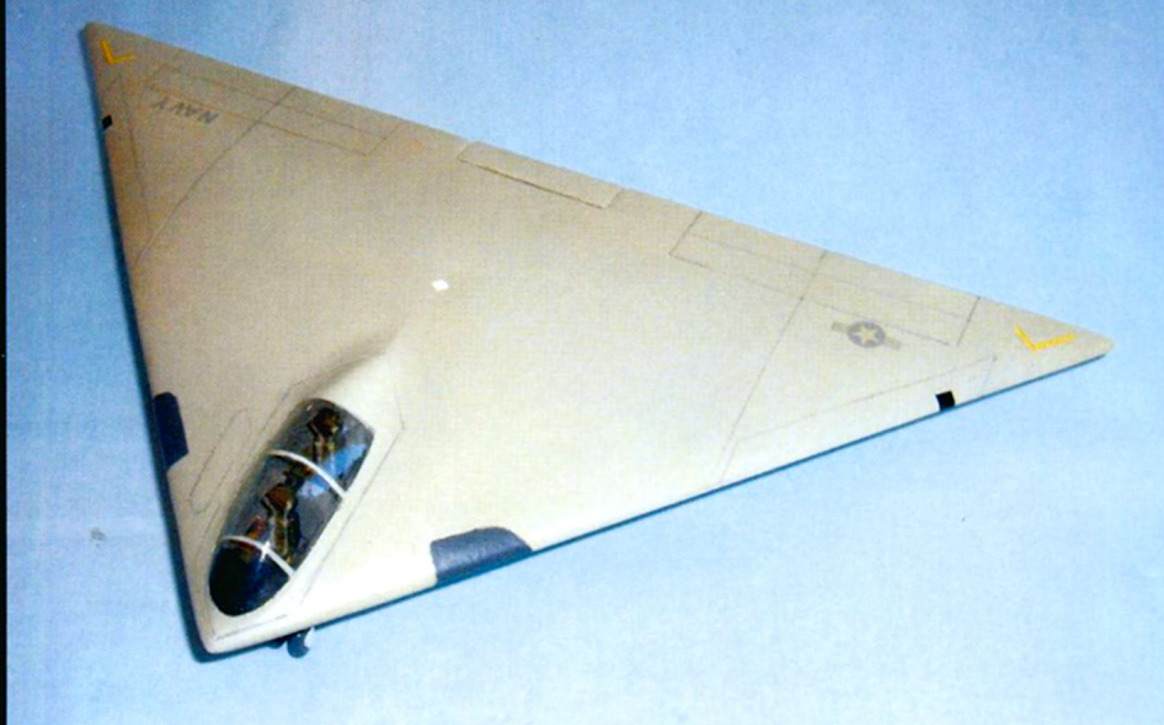


Masking removed, a neat matt black wingwalk remains



Codes were painstakingly made up from red and white decal

Richard Staszak
scratchbuilds the
stillborn MDD/GD
A-12 Avenger II



The Flying Dorito

In the early 1980s the US Navy awarded a contract to a McDonnell Douglas/General Dynamics consortium for the development of the Advanced Attack Aircraft (ATA) to replace the venerable Grumman A-6 Intruder in the attack role. The primary feature of the new design, provisionally designated A-12, was incorporation of stealth technology. There was an initial requirement for 620 aircraft for the US Navy and 238 for the US Marine Corps, with potential for a further 400 for the US Air Force.

Little information was made available publicly about the design concept employed by the development team until 1990, when word leaked among the defense community that development was encountering technical problems. A small artist's drawing of the proposed design that appeared in *Aviation Week* revealed it to be a flying wing, promptly dubbed 'The Flying Dorito'. On 7 January 1991, after encountering serious engineering problems and a cost overrun of some \$2 billion, the project was cancelled on the grounds that it could not meet the original specifications requested by the US Navy, but it was not until June 1996 that a full-scale mock-up of the aircraft was finally revealed to the public, and was later put on display at the Aviation

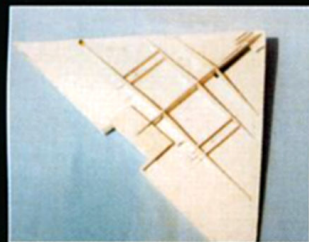
Heritage Museum in Alliance, Texas.

As my modelling emphasis has been on unusual, prototype/experimental aircraft, and flying wings in particular, I was always interested in the 'Avenger II' as the A-12 had provisionally been named, as a possible candidate for my collection. While Web-surfing, I discovered a detailed presentation on the aircraft which included a small three-view as well as many pictures and drawings. This data whetted my appetite for starting a 1/72 scale scratchbuild project. Whilst I am not a proficient scratchbuilder, the nature of the design — basically just a triangle — offered what appeared to be a fairly

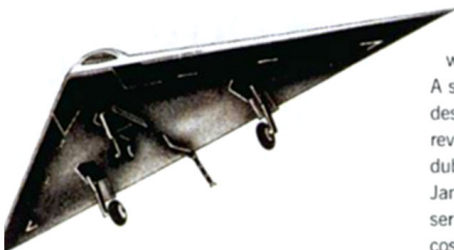
simple method for building the model.

I started by enlarging the three-view to 1/72 scale according to published dimensions. I made a cardboard pattern of the entire wing shape using the corrected drawing and laid it on a sheet of 1/4-inch thick plastic, from which I cut the basic shape using a razor saw. I then sanded the wing's trailing-edge to a fine aerofoil section before cutting out the rear manoeuvring flap and an opening for the cockpit.

Using the side elevation drawing I drew two lines a quarter-inch apart using the wing centreline as a reference to represent the thickness of the plastic wing I had previously made. The areas

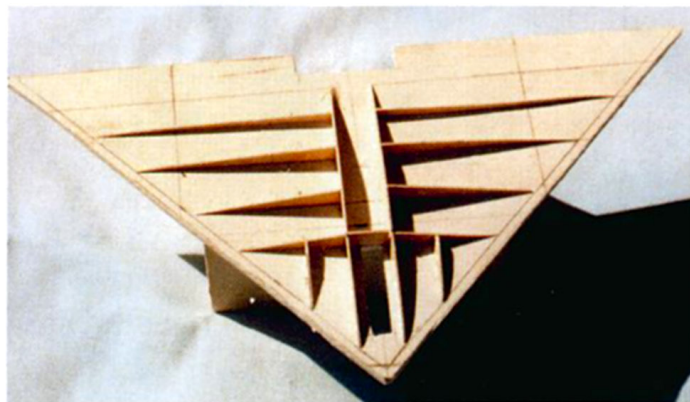


View of wing underside with sample spars/ribs, gear wells and engine exhaust box installed

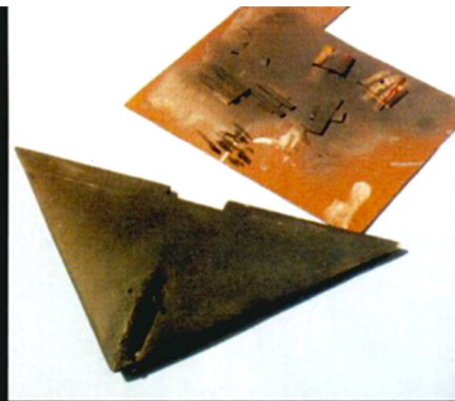
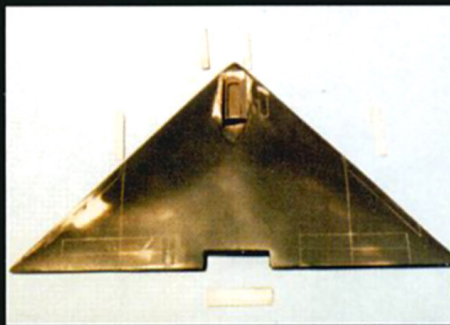
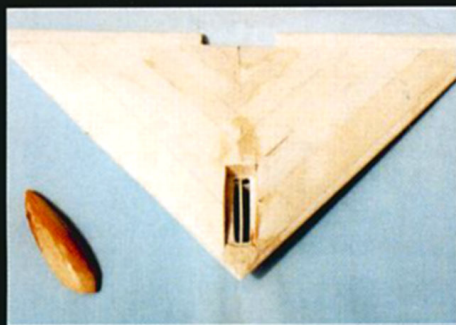


References:

- www.habu2.net/a12/avenger2.htm
- F-15E Strike Eagle, *World Airpower Journal*, Vol 21, Summer 1995



View of wing top with some of the spars/ribs installed



above and below this core now defined the height of the central ribs, whose profiles were transferred to .030 sheet plastic and two ribs cut out.

With the central ribs glued in place on the master core triangle I could now define the height of all the intermediate ribs as the wing tapered to the tips. To help this process I made a series of spars. All subsequent wing ribs were of the same shape as the central rib, only smaller in dimensions. Ribs and spars were also used on the underside in a similar fashion. To accommodate the landing gear bay, small strips were also inserted to form a box. A box made of .030 sheet plastic represented the flat engine exhaust area, and yet more boxes were used to form the intake openings. In this case they had slanted sides that matched the shape of the intake opening as shown in the aircraft front view. I made rear blanking plates for the intakes that included three interior guide vanes from thin plastic sheet, then painted this area flat black. The units were inserted into each intake box, which had previously been painted in the basic aircraft colour, before the entire assembly was glued to

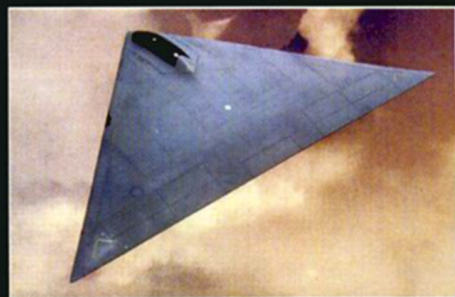
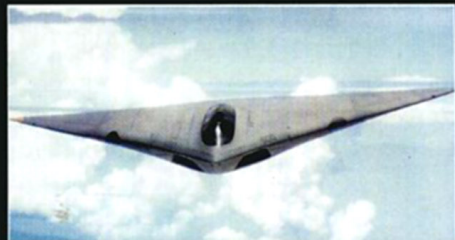
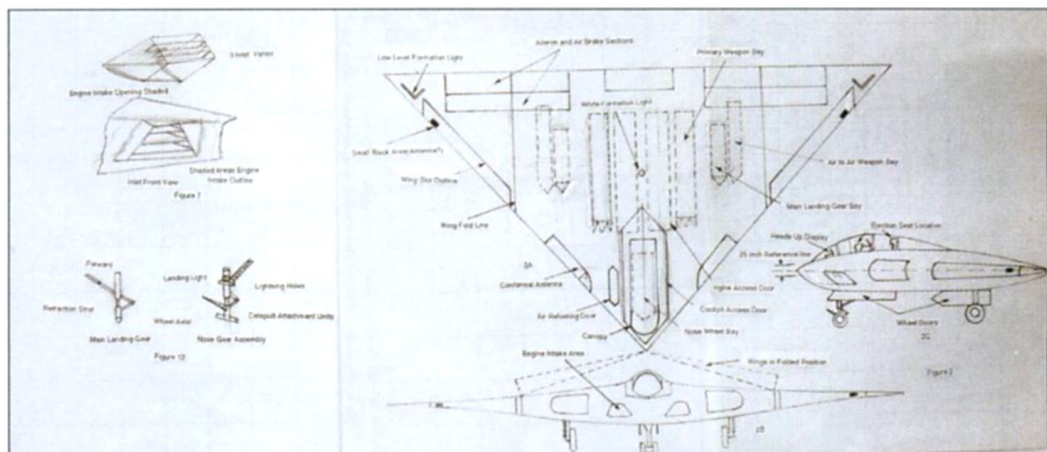
the core triangle.

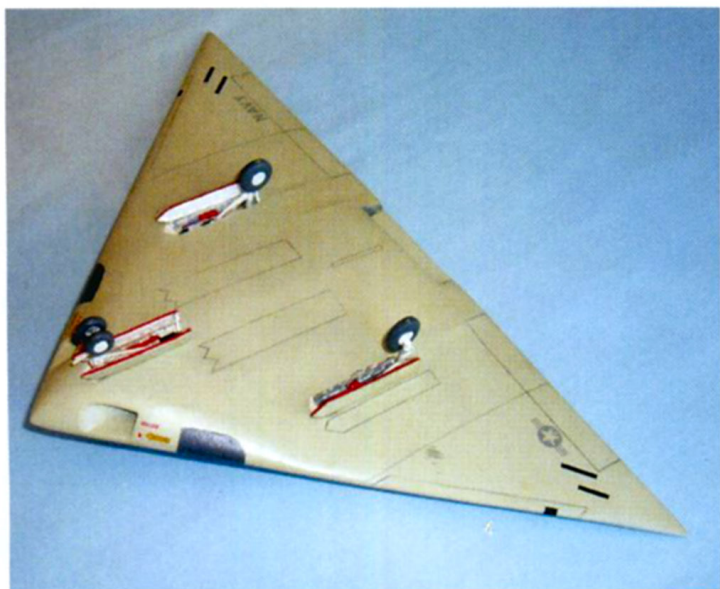
Next, the wing ribs nearest to the engine intakes were glued into place and the fronts of the intakes were rough-shaped to match the wing profile. The next step was to lay .010 plastic sheets on the ribs to form the wing skin. In retrospect I should have used a thicker gauge plastic, as in the sanding process to blend the sections

of sheets together I created a few breakthroughs that required major repair. Between sandings I applied filler until I was satisfied that I had a smooth surface on the top and bottom of the model. At this time I also blended in the engine intakes to match the wing aerofoil.

Throughout the construction process I had left the cockpit area

open until I had a satisfactory profile for the complete wing. To develop the cockpit canopy I inserted a block of soft balsa wood into the opening that I had already profiled to match the shape on the drawing. With the wooden block in place I sanded it to shape in cross-section and profile to blend it into the basic airframe, then removed the block and applied several





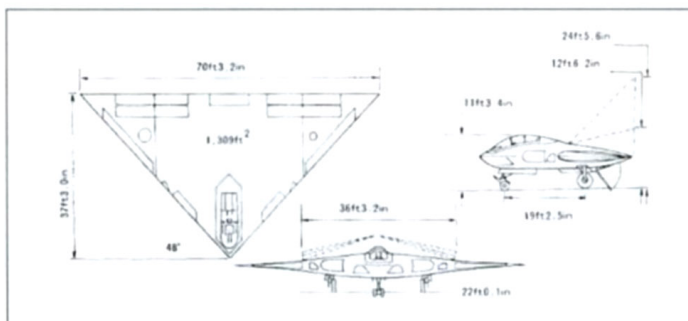
coats of sanding sealer to create a mould which was used as a master for forming a clear plastic canopy using the 'plunge' process.

At this point I primed both top and bottom of the wing and sanded, filled, sanded, primed until I had achieved a surface satisfactory for the final colour coats. Before detailing the cockpit area I scribed in the few detailing lines for the primary control surfaces, wingfold lines, armament bays and air-to-air refuelling door. Using dark grey primer helped in establishing the lines, as each cut exposed the white plastic undersurface. In the interim periods between priming and sanding I had constructed the three landing gear units using sections of aluminium tubing and paper clip wire. Wheels came from the spares box.

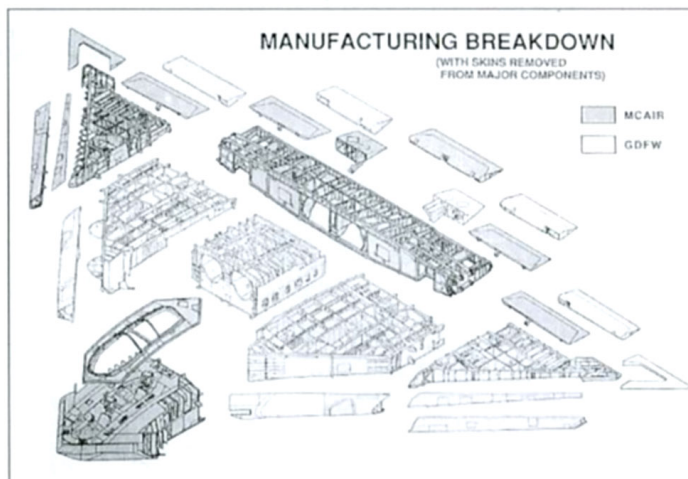
From website information it appeared to me that the A-12's cockpit layout would have been similar to that



of the F-15E Strike Eagle, so drawing on data about that aircraft from a copy of *World Airpower Journal* I scratchbuilt the interiors of both crew positions and added Aeroclub white metal ejection seats. The cockpit interior was painted dark grey with black seats and details. Instrument panels came from an old IPMS decal



Factory three-view general arrangement drawing (MDD/GD)



Schematic showing major structural components and work split between airframe contractors General Dynamics and Northrop Grumman (MDD/GD)

sheet, augmented by touches of colour to enhance the interior. Primary focus here was on the 'glass panel' displays that comprised the primary instruments in both crew positions. These were painted the dull dark green characteristic of these displays when not powered up.

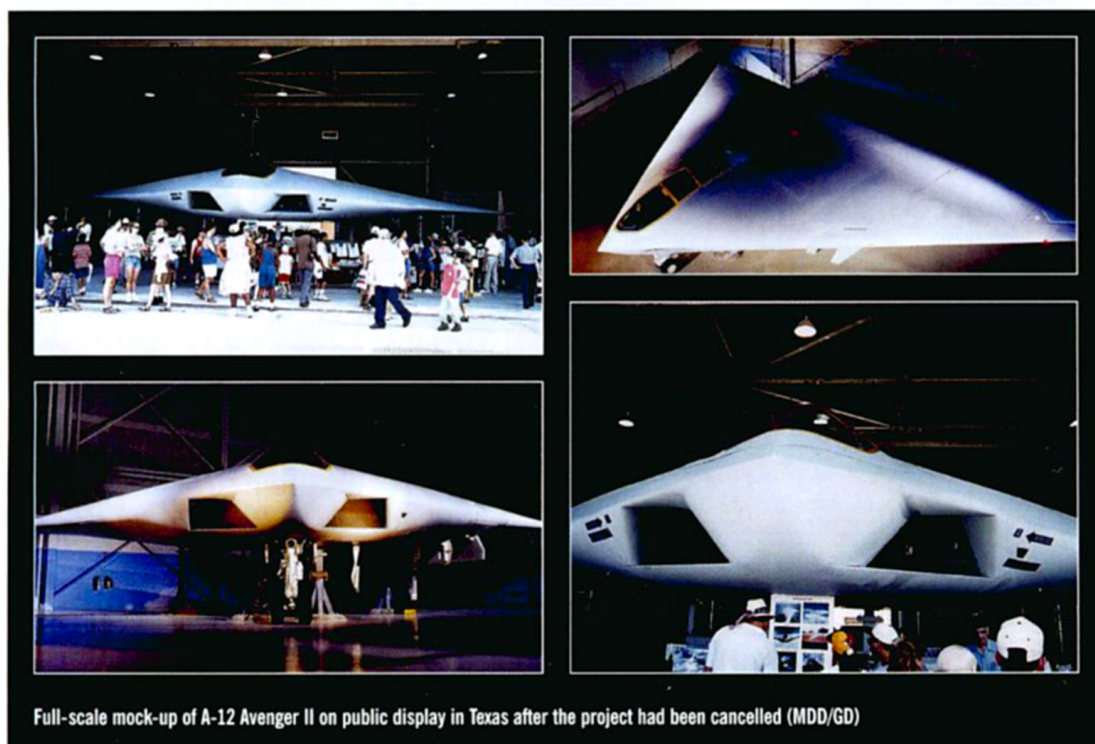
Upon completion of the cockpit area

the canopy was installed and body putty was used to blend the clear section into the main wing. The panel lines for the canopy opening were also engraved at this time. Next, the interiors of the wheel bays and wheel doors were painted gloss white and masked off.

The entire model was airbrushed in a Light Ghost Gray scheme similar to that applied in later service to the A-6 Intruder, which this aircraft was intended to replace. The radar panels on the wings were sprayed in dark grey and two small black areas near the wingtips were hand painted. Decals were taken from an F/A-18 Hornet sheet and comprised low-viz insignia, 'Navy' titles and formation lights, the latter being applied to the upper surfaces only. No serial numbers or other squadron markings were added as this was intended to represent a prototype, not an operational aircraft.

I had detailed the interior of the wheel wells and wheel doors with strips of thin plastic and added some representative piping of various colours within the wheel wells to provide some character. The edges of the wheel doors were painted red following standard USN practice, then the doors were added to the model together with the exhaust flap to finish what I consider to be a worthy addition to my growing collection of the 'weird and wonderful' aircraft.

SAMI



Full-scale mock-up of A-12 Avenger II on public display in Texas after the project had been cancelled (MDD/GD)



Wheels to Wings

Car modeller Paul Adams builds Hasegawa's 1/32 scale Messerschmitt Bf 109G-14 in Erich Hartmann's Eastern Front winter scheme from 1945

So, how did *this* happen? "A car modeller in the pages of *SAMI*? Whatever next?" I hear you cry. Hopefully, you will have checked out the pictures before reading this, and that, despite my years of automotive modelling and virtually no aircraft model experience, I haven't offended anyone and you're not about to cancel your subscription!

But to answer the question seriously, it all began a few years after getting back into the hobby in the mid-1990s. As my car models increased in number so did my model magazine collection, one of which featured an article by Jerry Crandell entitled *The Blond Knight* about top-scoring Luftwaffe ace Erich Hartmann. Until then I hadn't seen any winter scheme models and this really caught my eye. It seemed at that time unusual, though today it's a case of spot the Tiger I tank at a model show that *doesn't* have a winter camouflage paint job! The magazine article gathered dust for a few more years, then I volunteered for a club group-build of the Spitfire in

1/48 scale. I drew an 'easy' build of Tamiya's Mk Vb, gave it a Malta Campaign scheme, weathered it some, popped it on a base and promptly collected Gold in a club competition. Finally, after a visit to the IPMS Farnborough show in 2004 where I drooled over some of the superb Luftwaffe models by the folk at The Black Cross Society, my interest was engaged further and the project was go!

What you discover when you cross over disciplines is the vast and quite daunting array of aftermarket accessories available to the modeller. With that in mind, and as I was keen to keep the build simple, I purchased some Eduard pre-painted etched seatbelt hardware and a set of EagleCal decals and left it at that. Flashy resin add-ons will be for next time. What you also discover is the huge amount of easy-to-find reference that is available, again daunting and almost bewildering. Believe me, if automotive modellers had it this good, life would be a lot simpler. Finding a cockpit or engine shot of a modern

Formula One car — or an old one in some cases — requires techniques of which Sherlock Holmes would have been proud! Fearing information overload, I settled on three books that helped give me a feel for how these aircraft looked in service. In addition, the EagleCal decal set had a guide sheet providing more information and, importantly, two valuable photos of the actual aircraft. With all this information surely I couldn't go wrong? Except...I'd bought the wrong kit!

In my haste to get my hands on a Bf 109G I had overlooked some major details with 'Black <<'. Jerry Crandell's info sheet stated that Hartmann might have flown a G-14, not a G-6. The subtle difference was enough to convince me to study my references further. I had completely missed the fact that it had an 'Erla-Haube' canopy, not the three-piece style of early machines as in my G-6 kit, in which just one style of hood is provided. My Tamiya Spitfire had come with two, so why didn't the '109? And

so a G-14 kit was purchased which had the correct canopy and larger tail.

Now I had kit, references and decals. I peered into my paint box and remembered I'd need something a little different than McLaren fluorescent red. I planned to use the Hannants' Xtracrylix paint along with some from the trusty Polly Scale range. I then learned all about the *Reichsluftfahrtministerium* even if I still can't pronounce it!

Construction

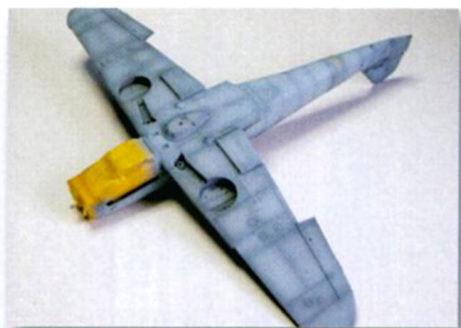
I started with the cockpit — no surprise there. The kit provides a basic interior that looks a little sparse, so I decided to add some cabling to busy things up. The cabling was yellowish in colour and its omission would be apparent even to the casual viewer — a quick check of the aftermarket resin interiors and you'll see huge amounts of it running through and around the cockpit. I used cable wrap. The kit provides some add-on parts such as the switch box, the prominent fuel line that runs just beneath the sill, and some gauges. The pilot's seat is very



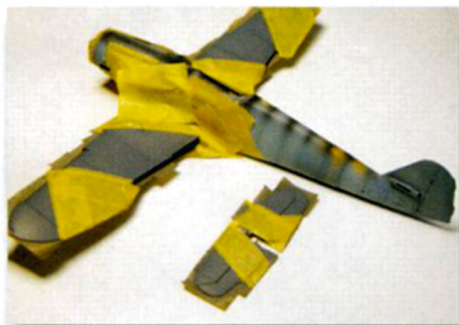
The primed and pre-shaded airframe before disaster struck!



After repriming, pre-shading and spraying the undercowling and tail band



The underside following application of RLM76. Pre-shading shows through nicely, adding interest to the colour



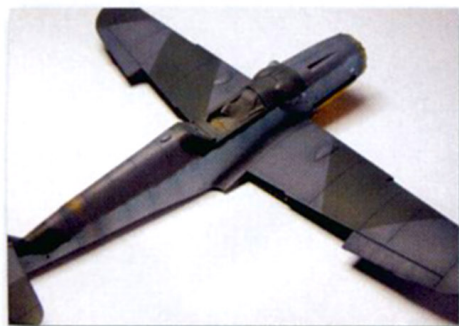
Following application of RLM75, the model is masked up ready for gray-green



Undercoat scheme taking shape



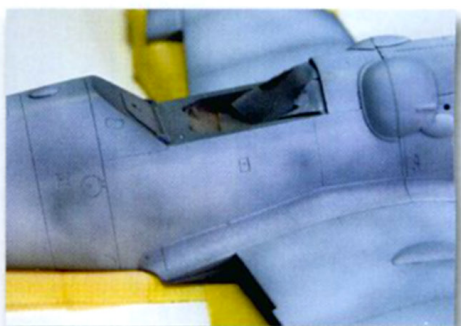
Blu-Tack used here to achieve the soft-edged demarcation line along the fuselage



With masking removed the desired effect is seen



My rather sad attempt at dapple! Not to worry, as this was largely covered by the winter wash...



...which was applied thin enough to show that something's under there!

basic but satisfactory, and this, along with pedals, control column and other controls were glued in place on the cockpit floor ready for painting. The instructions call for RLM66 *Schwarzgrau* for the interior colour: correct, because late '109s used grey, while earlier 'E and 'F variants used RLM02 *Grau*. The parts were airbrushed followed by some slight panel shading using grey with a little white added. This was followed by two coats of Johnson's Klear. A wash with a mix of black and brown oils was sealed with Xtracrylix flat varnish, then dry-brushed using Tamiya marker pen chrome to give the cockpit a used look. I know some modellers tend to dry-brush greys with a light grey colour but I prefer the look that silver gives — nice and metallic. I picked out some details using enamels and followed this with gentle use of Mig Productions 'dark mud' to the cockpit floor and pedals. The first of the seatbelts was added followed by another coat of varnish to remove the shiny look of the etched parts. Further dry-brushing with silver to

create freshly worn areas and it was done. The cockpit now looked fairly convincing. Who needs resin?

The panel was airbrushed Tamiya semi-gloss black and I dry-brushed the gauges with silver followed by two coats of Johnson's Klear, and sealed the gauges with small blobs of Humbrol Maskol and then airbrushed RLM66. More dry-brushing and flat varnish, remove the Maskol and hey presto — glossy instrument faces contrasting nicely against the flat grey panel. There are instrument decals in the kit but I think painting gives a far more realistic, used look.

The two fuselage halves could now be mated. The kit cleverly provides the tail section as a separate piece, enabling Hasegawa to issue versions of the '109 without major retooling. The good fit of the main parts meant less work to do when cleaning up the seams, which usually tedious job was completed in a short time, though I did need filler here and there and had to rescribe some panel lines. I added the instrument

panel and cockpit floor to the fuselage and now I could then get to an exciting bit — attaching the wings! Hasegawa provide outriggers to help secure the wings and give strength to the whole assembly. Excellent I thought...nice and secure. Those were to become famous last words.

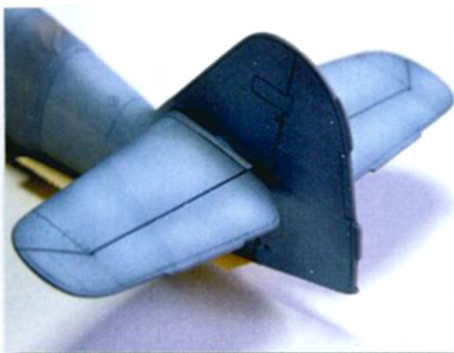
With the wings in place I worked on the tailplanes, propellers and spinner, adding the machine gun bumps or *Beule* and engine cover (a choice of two in the kit) to the fuselage. I also prepared the flaps and landing gear, as these parts would need painting along with the fuselage.

It was at this point I began to appreciate the differences in aircraft and automotive modelling. After a few days' work I had a painted interior and had constructed the basic components of the model, giving a sense of real progress. To experience this euphoria when building your car you need to wait a few weeks until you have prepared and painted virtually everything before any real construction begins.

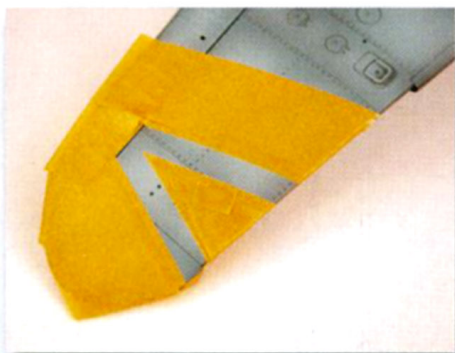
Painting

I decided to try Alclad's airbrush-ready grey primer, mainly because I was keen to retain as much surface detail as possible. After two coats it looked great. Next job was to begin the weathering process by airbrushing thinned flat black into the panel lines and various nooks to help create some shading and break up the final colours. This really works well if you airbrush your camouflage colour on thinly, building it and *just* getting the shading to show through.

With this model I wanted to spray the full camouflage scheme and then apply the white wash over that, just as the real thing was painted in the field. I planned to let some of the base scheme show through, which hopefully would add to the realism. My plan was to paint the white nose first, then the yellow tail band and lower engine cover, mask off and begin applying the dapple/splinter scheme. I used Xtracrylix white for the nose, building the colour slowly to match the density seen in photos. I then masked up the nose. I had to reposition



More base coat seen on the tail



Hungarian theatre 'V' is masked and painted. Subsequent tidying improved things



The cockpit interior benefited from the addition of etched belts



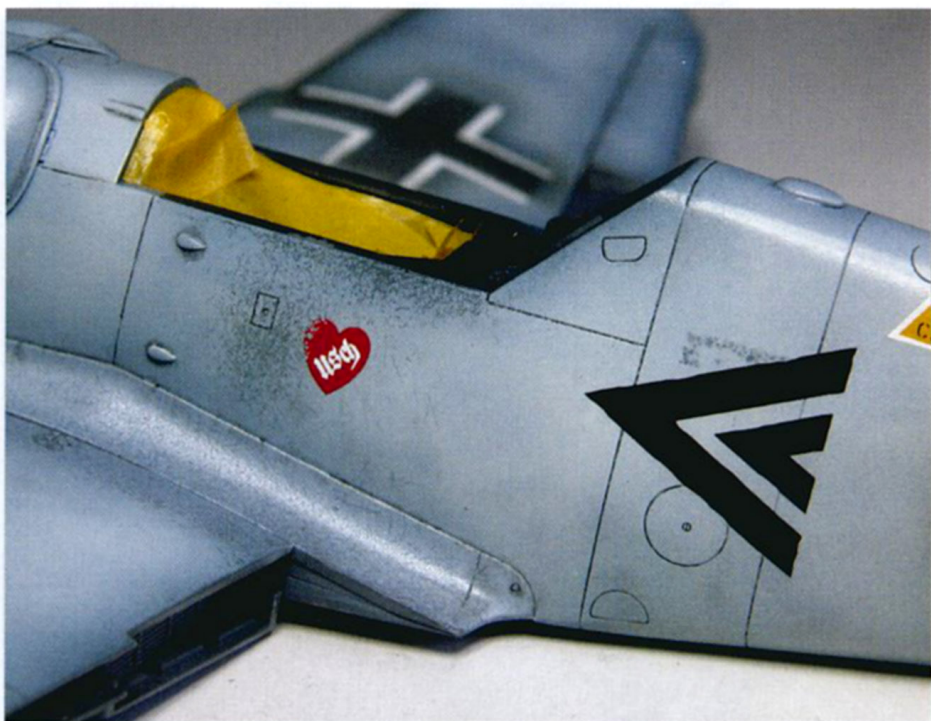
Blocking-out with RLM74 ready for the insignia



Paint chips by the cockpit exit and wingroot



Several coats of Johnson's Klear were applied over the entire model ready for decaling and washes



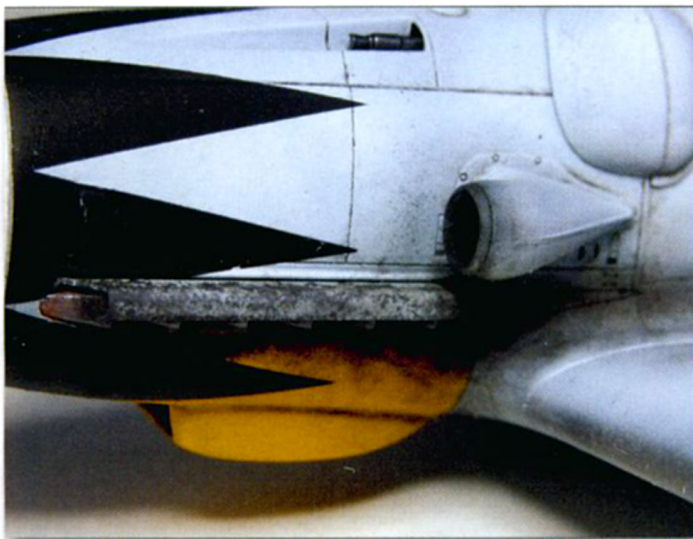
Decaling was completed in just a few hours. The red heart with 'Usch' for Hartmann's wife received some subtle weathering too



The airframe decaled and with oil-based washes applied



Flat varnish applied and further weathering has begun



Close-up view of exhaust shield chipping and staining



Completed cockpit. Note shoulder harness posed draped for added interest



The propeller blades were 'chipped' using a Berol Charismacolor pencil. The white overspray is a prominent feature on the real aircraft



Dry-brushing revealed nice detail on the wheels and tyres

my first masked line, and in doing so the white paint was lifted, together with the pre-shading and primer. Further tests showed the primer had not bonded to the plastic and would simply peel off when masking tape got anywhere near it. Using a tirade of expletives — some I believe I invented — the whole aircraft was gently wet-sanded and recoated with Halfords grey primer and re-pre-shaded (another new word!). The white was redone and next the yellow, Polly Scale RLM04, again in thin coats, letting some pre-shading show through once more. I'll try again with the Alclad another day. The model was now ready for its fading winter paint scheme.

First the light blue. Polly Scale RLM76 *Lichtblau* was thinned about 60% paint to thinner and sprayed at 15 psi. I used Halfords distilled water for thinning. This colour was applied to the undersides and up the fuselage to a rough line just beneath the cockpit. Some areas underneath were shaded further by applying more blue in the panel centres. The undersides areas were then masked

and then the RLM75/76 *Grauviolett/Lichtblau* colours went on. I used Xtracrylix, thinned 50% paint to thinner and shot at around 12 psi. Grey was followed by masking for the splinter pattern and then the green, starting with the wings and tailplanes. The fuselage sides were then masked with Blu-Tack to create the semi-feathered edge. Some thin 'sausages' were applied from nose to tail and then the grey was gently airbrushed on. After this was dry, further masking was done for the green sections. The masking was removed immediately following painting to ensure that no residue was left from the Blu-Tack. I then applied the 'dapple' to the fuselage sides using the same colours. I struggled a little here with the airbrush, as the cheap double-action type I had did not want to do small lines and spots. It was at the limit of its usefulness. Note to self: invest in better airbrush!

Now onto the white wash. I thinned down some more of the white I had used on the nose — around 70:30 thinner to paint — and added a drop or

two of grey to take the edge off the white. With the masking for the tail band, nose and engine cover still in place, a random cloudy pattern of spray was employed to impart a hastily applied look. I airbrushed at 12 psi to give myself time to build up the colour slowly, accentuating the panel centres. The tailplanes and upper surfaces of the separate flaps were all done in the same session for consistency. I made three applications of white before I was happy, with the underlying scheme just showing through here and there. I was then able to remove the masking and plan the next stages of painting and weathering.

Turning my attention to the underside, the wheel wells, landing gear and inner faces of the flaps were painted with RLM70 *Schwarzgrün*. I decided at this stage to paint the Hungarian theatre 'V' found on the underside of the left wing. This marking was on the decal sheet, but didn't quite match the yellow I had used elsewhere. I made another mistake here in that I did not mask up the surrounding areas sufficiently to prevent

overspray and realised afterwards that there was a faint yellow line two inches or so from the 'V'. Doh! More blue followed, but worse was to come, as when I removed the masking tape I pulled at just the right angle (along the wing) for the entire wing to come off! At this stage I put the kettle on and considered taking up another hobby. Repairs followed and fortunately no harm was done. Lesson learned though.

I then spent two evenings slowly chipping the white away along the wing roots and in various places where wear would occur: service personnel and the harsh conditions in the field would soon remove the tenuous nature of the white wash. Sources indicate that in the field the various markings were painted on roughly and this applied also to the white and black crosses found on this aircraft. Areas were blocked-out with green to allow the white markings to show against the winter camouflage. To make the model look convincing enough I had to do this on 'Black >>' and I approached the whole thing with some



trepidation as I was keen not to obliterate the winter paint job. I photocopied the decal sheet and cut out the markings to use as stencils. After tacking them into place I airbrushed RLM74 *Graugrün* around the edges to give me an outline, and once the mask was removed I painted-in the space. This worked OK on the fuselage sides but not on the wings. The green area was too big and would need tidying once the decals were on. I used this technique on the tail and realised that I had put the Swastika stencil on at the wrong angle...more tidying with the white was needed. Finally, I masked off the cockpit surround and airbrushed black/grey to match the rest of the cockpit interior.

Decals

Next went on the Johnson's Klear, a base from which the decals and washes could be applied. When doing this it is best to apply some light coats at first (spraying at 25 psi), then build up the gloss by airbrushing heavier layers. Don't worry about the coats looking thick when wet, because once dry they tend to thin out. You need to achieve a smooth surface or the decals will silver. I trimmed the decals right back, removing the carrier film where possible. I found the white parts of the EagleCal decals rather thick and not very responsive to Micro Sol. The crosses on the wings were cut out and applied individually, one corner at a time. The aircraft had little in the way of markings due to the temporary paint and so decaling was completed in just a few hours. I added more chipping to the distinctive *Usc* heart decal to match that I had previously applied on the exit side of the cockpit.

Weathering

I mixed a dark grey wash from black and white oil paints thinned with white spirit, and applied this to all panel lines, external fittings, rivets, in fact anything to which the wash would cling! This was for me the most satisfying part of the weathering as it really brought out the detail in the engraving and all my hard work in pre- and post-shading. I added some oil streaks and stains with oil paint before the model was left overnight to dry. I followed up with several coats of undiluted Xtracrylix flat varnish on all of the painted parts —



Hannants recommend thinning it but I found it then didn't dry very flat. It was now that all of the various mediums I'd used to create this paint scheme blended together.

Next on the agenda was to finish the detail parts and in particular the 'Erla-Haube' canopy. I had omitted to paint this while doing the rest of the model and as the windscreens was also partly camouflaged with the white this wasn't advisable. The instructions stated black for the canopy, however, in the reference photo I had the hood and screen looked dark green and since the surrounding cockpit was camouflaged in dark green it was painted accordingly. I masked the green area on the screen and added the white to match what I had on the fuselage. I used the masking from the outside of the canopy on the inside and airbrushed flat varnish to make it appear that the hood frame was also painted on the inside. Shoulder harnesses were added to the cockpit.

The exhausts had their outlets drilled out and they were sprayed with Humbrol polished steel. After buffing they were weathered by brush with Mig Pigments, dark, light rust and black smoke. Once in place I carefully added the exhaust covers. I had previously improved the scale effect on these by thinning their outer edges. Once they were in place I set about weathering them further. Being subjected to heat from the exhausts, the paint would soon flake off. Using a fine brush I applied a chipped finish to the paint using Humbrol Metalcote polished steel. The paint finish was left as it dried; the

exposed steel on the real aircraft would show a different sheen from the white wash. Using Mig black smoke I applied more staining around the exhausts and back along the fuselage.

Final details

The wheels were next — I sprayed their centres with semi-gloss black and applied some gloss varnish for the decals followed by a coat of Xtracrylix satin varnish. I then dry-brushed with chrome silver and masked-off in order to paint the tyres in a mix of semi-gloss black, dark grey and red-brown. Tyres should just be on the grey side, never black, and after assembly and some more weathering with Mig pigments these looked the part.

I was on the final stretch now. The

propeller blades were chipped with a Berol Carismacolour silver pencil and the spinner attached. During various stages of the build I broke the propeller blades away from the spinner four times. Car modellers, eh? The canopy could now be fitted after further weathering to the pilot's armour plate, followed by the final small detail parts including the radio antenna wire made from invisible thread. The model was complete.

Obviously at this stage you will look for me to compare disciplines. To be honest they are miles apart. However, I believe the skills you learn in any form of modelling can be used elsewhere. While Hasegawa's kit virtually fell together, I took pleasure in the knowledge that should anything have gone wrong (as it did) the problem could be corrected. Car modellers rarely have this luxury. A bodged paint job would normally mean back to the drawing board or filing the model in the bin! One aspect I particularly enjoyed was the freedom with which I could use my airbrushes. Applying the random winter finish seemed more creative than I am used to being. Blocking-in colour will never seem the same. Oh, and I nearly forgot — weathering is great fun!

Since building the '109 my aircraft kit 'to do' list has expanded. But am I a complete convert? No. Four wheels will always be my first love, but when I'm next asked, "What are you building?" it might well be another three-wheeler!

SAMI



"A car modeller on the pages of SAMI?" Some of Paul's superb car and motorcycle models



The Sutton Coldfield Model Makers' Society (SCMMS) held its annual Model Spectacular in the elegant surroundings of Sutton Coldfield's Town Hall on 10 September. SAMI's Managing Editor was invited to present prizes for the annual competition, which is unusual in that the host club's members are not allowed to enter, thus avoiding the oft heard cries of 'local bias!' when results are announced. Here's a selection of winners and other models that caught our eye.

SAMI



Catalina from the Revell 1/48 kit and finished in RAF markings from an Aeromaster decal set placed second in its class (Photo: Robert Day)

Sutton Coldfield

Model Spectacular 2006



Messerschmitt Me 262A-2a placed third in 1/48 scale class (Photo: Robert Day)



This 'straight from the box' Special Hobby 1/48 scale Morane Saulnier Type 'N' Bullet placed second in its class (Photo: Mike Jerram)



Trumpeter 1/32 scale F-105D Thunderchief finished as Major 'Buddy' Jones's 'Memphis Belle II' (Photo: Mike Jerram)



North American B-45 Tornado from the 1/72 scale Mach 2 kit finished in the spurious Royal Air Force colours worn by aircraft operated in 1952 out of RAF Sculthorpe on clandestine spying missions over the Soviet Union (Photo: Robert Day)



Class 2 Winner was this Airco D.H.2 (Photo: Robert Day)



1/48 scale Grumman Avenger in Fleet Air Arm colours (Photo: Mike Jerram)



1/32 scale Messerschmitt Bf 109G was an eyecatcher in Italian Air Force colour scheme (Photo: Mike Jerram)



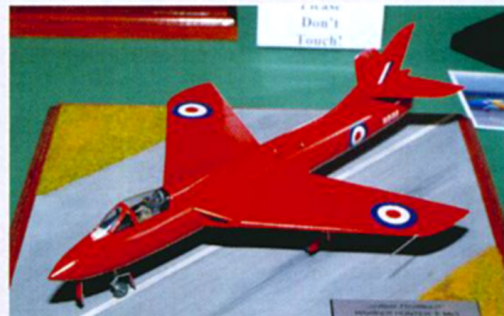
Gavia's 1/48 Polikarpov Po-2VS, a type not often seen on competition tables, earned a Commended (Photo: Robert Day)



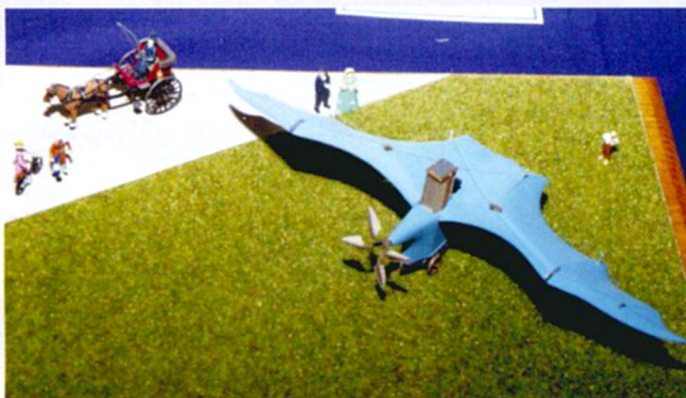
DHC-6 Twin Otter from the Matchbox kit, built by SCMMS's Paul Barand (Photo: Robert Day)



US Army engineers inspecting an incomplete Do 335A-12 at the Dornier factory at Oberpfaffenhofen, Bavaria in April 1945 (Photo: Robert Day)



Neville Duke's famous red Hawker Hunter F3 WB188, in which he set a new World Air Speed Record at 727.63 mph on 7 September 1953, converted from Academy's 1/48 scale kit by SCMMS's George Wright (Photo: Robert Day)



This unusual diorama featured Clement Ader's steam-powered Avion No 3 'Eole' in which the Frenchman claimed to have made a flight of some 160 feet on 9 October 1890. Modelled from the Skuld vacform kit (Photo: Robert Day)



This 1/32 scale Tamiya F-4B Phantom in US Navy VF-111 'Sundowners' livery featured extensive modifications and detailing and was a class winner for Dave Foxall of Warrington IPMS branch (Photo: Mike Jerram)



Revell's 1/144 scale Dornier Do-X built by SCMMS member Roy Brittain (Photo: Robert Day)



SCMMS member Paul Barand's Boeing 767 in All Nippon Airways 'Pokemon' scheme (Photo: Robert Day)



Mannock's Last Mount

Neil Pinchbeck builds the Revell 1/48 scale RAF S.E.5a

Bargain beginning

It was my birthday. We had made a short business visit near London's Covent Garden and my wife and I were walking back up Long Acre towards Holborn underground station. I did a crafty left into Drury Lane, then right at the end, into High Holborn.

"If we go this way," I said, "we pass a very nice model shop."

"Just as long as we pass it" she replied, but there was a twinkle in her eye. And it was my birthday.

A few minutes later we were in the splendid emporium for which I had been heading. Now I don't know about you, but these places, marvellous though they are, have a terrible mesmerising effect on me. My eyes glazed over and something between intoxication and panic set in. In the next 20 minutes I found myself clutching, in turn, a Monogram B-29, the Airfix Bloodhound reissue and several other equally out of character items.

At first, she tried to join in and be helpful. Knowing I like vintage subjects,

she handed me a box.

"This one looks old," She said. It was the Airfix Handley Page Halifax.

"Don't try to help," I muttered, beads of perspiration breaking out on my brow.

It was beginning to wear thin. She noticed that she was the only lady in the establishment and made a gender-related remark which I won't repeat. The security man on the door began to smirk. I subdued him with a withering glance.

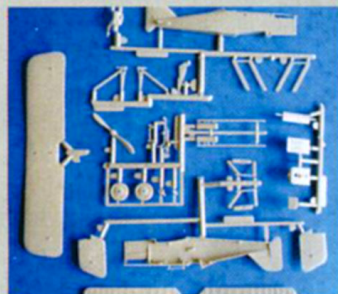
Now things fell apart completely.

References:

- VCs of the First World War: The Air VCs, Peter Cooksley. Sutton Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0-7509-1212-X (Mannock was awarded the VC posthumously in 1919)
- Tumult in the Clouds, by Nigel Steel and Peter Hart. Hodder & Stoughton. ISBN 0-340-638451



"There, on top of the sale bargains pile was the Revell 1/48 S.E.5a — and for just £3.99!"



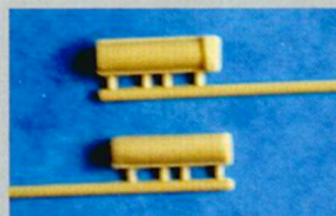
"The box held four sprues of buff-coloured plastic and the first impression was favourable (sigh of relief!)"



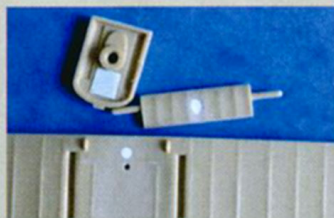
Parts separated from their sprues



Neil built up the curve of the kit's inaccurate nose with plasticard strip that was filled and sanded to correct profile



"The cylinder banks were too big (top) so I cut off the back end of each block and shaved them as thin as possible (bottom)"



Ejector pin holes filled with typewriter correction fluid and radiator grille backed with plasticard to prevent see-through to empty engine bay



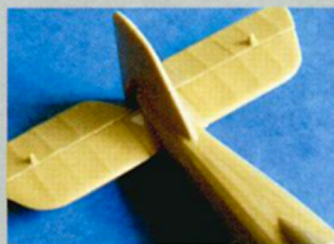
Interior painted burnt orange colour to represent primer-doped fabric and framework picked out in a light timber colour. Pencil lines represent cross-bracing wires



"The kit contained a good set of instructions, a skein of rigging twine and an excellent decal sheet that included E 1295/A of 74 Squadron RFC, 'Mick' Mannock's last mount"



Instrument panel was detailed from contemporary photographs



Elevators separated and reset slightly depressed



Conjoined interplane struts and cabane struts set in place

"Why don't you just finish some of those you've got in the wardrobe?" She demanded in a loud voice. "And the sideboard. And the garage," she added for good measure.

I had no answer. The security man was laughing openly now. I conceded defeat and headed for the exit, head bowed.

Then, just next to the door, the sale bargains were stacked, and there, on top of the pile was the Revell 1/48 Royal Aircraft Factory S.E.5a — and for just £3.99!

Biggles did a victory roll as we were swallowed up by the subterranean transport system of the metropolis.

There is no doubt that the fascination that still attaches to Major Edward Corringham 'Mick' Mannock VC, DSO (2 Bars), MC (1 Bar) — the highest-scoring ace of the British and Commonwealth Air Forces of WWI — lies in the complexity of his character. It is not that little is known of the man, rather the opposite. He was an outgoing person who clearly manifested many aspects of himself. The fascination lies in the apparent contradictions or doubtful nature of a good number of these aspects.

Whether it is a few lines on the side of a kit box or a dusty tome from a library shelf, it is not long before biographers are united in calling Mannock an Irishman, or even 'The Irishman'. This first fact is doubtful on any other grounds than parentage. It seems that 'Mick' never set foot on the Emerald Isle.

On Merit

With the euphoria of my birthday and the purchasing experience over, it was time to open the box. In the light of day, £3.99 for a 1/48 kit did not bode well. This certainly wasn't going to be a new or even original Revell offering, so whose sprues were in the box?

My guess is Merit's, a real golden oldie and a name of which I have mixed experience. Their lovely 1/48 Avro 504K was my first kit in that scale. Aged about 12, I built it in complete awe. I made no attempt to paint it, knowing that I would ruin it if I tried. It also taught me salutary lessons about the ephemeral nature of the things we build (my grandma sat on it).

Against this there were some truly awful Merit 1/48s, including their Bristol Bulldog, which I regard as unbuildable (worth buying the SMER

version though, just for the decal sheet).

Edward Mannock was born in Brighton on 24 May 1887, to Julia and Corporal Edward Mannock of the 2nd Dragoons, Royal Scots Greys, during the regiment's brief stay at Preston Cavalry Barracks. Following Brighton, the Greys did go to Ireland for six years, (1888-94) followed by brief stays in Hounslow, Aldershot and Edinburgh, but it seems that the Mannock family (Edward had an elder brother and three sisters) escaped these travels due to their father's detached posting to the Army School in India, where Edward received his early education.

When the regiment sailed for South Africa in 1899, Edward Mannock senior rejoined them, and Julia Mannock set sail, with the children, to return to England where they set up house in Military Road, Canterbury.

At St Thomas's School Canterbury, young Edward suffered poor health, including the discovery of astigmatism in the left eye. He developed the reputation of being 'bookish', was musical and kept pets. Hardly the stuff of an action hero. He finally left school in 1900, aged 13.

Box opened

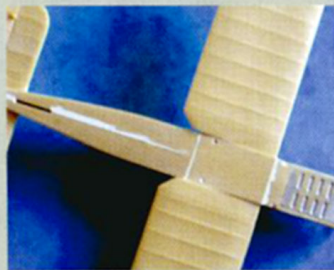
Allowing for the fact that the wings had become detached, the box held four sprues of buff-coloured plastic and the first impression was favourable (sigh of relief!). It also offered a good set of instructions, a skein of rigging twine and an excellent decal sheet that included an attractive American scheme. But the one that caught my eye was E 1295/A of 74 Squadron RFC: Mannock's last mount.

Separating the parts from their sprues provided the opportunity for a closer look at the parts: lots of crisp detail, and flying surfaces with particularly well done rib tapes and other structure. This check-over did reveal the necessity for some minor preparation jobs. There were some flash and mould lines to remove and some ejector pin holes to fill with typewriter correction fluid. I also backed the radiator grille with plasticard to prevent see-through to an empty engine bay.

Brief periods of employment as an errand boy and sweeper-up in a barber's shop were not great career starters, but at least meant that the young Mannock was well grounded in



"I do like the strength, positive fixing and ready-made dihedral that you get with a single-piece lower wing, although they usually call for a bit of filling"



Filler was needed around the bases of the interplane struts



Cabane struts were wrapped with masking tape to represent fabric covering



Metal engine cowl panels first finished with Humbrol MetalCote polished aluminium then dabbed with Maskol that would later be rubbed off to expose the finish beneath the PC10 top coat



Upper wing and lower surfaces prepared for painting



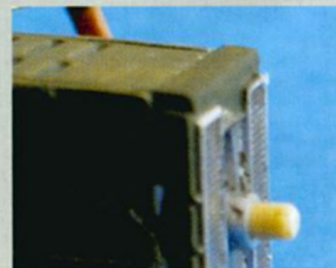
Undersurfaces painted Humbrol 74 natural linen and upper wing trial-fitted." It became apparent that the upper wing did not want to meet with the top ends of the interplane struts"



Uppersurface PC10 finish achieved with a mixture of Humbrol insignia yellow and matt black. Contemporary photographs show S.E.5as having a dark shade of PC10 which Neil replicated



"There was no doubt about it, the interplane struts were considerably too short!"



Radiator panel lengthened with plasticard strip and painted PC10 to match the fuselage

the lives of ordinary people.

Eventually, Edward followed his elder brother into the National Telephone Company. Office life did not suit and it was not long before he became an engineer's assistant for the company, what is known in America as a linesman. This meant a move away from home in Canterbury, to Wellingborough in Northamptonshire, where he joined a Territorial company of the Royal Army Medical Corps. Mannock was also instrumental in setting up a 'mock parliament' debating society, where he first gave public voice to his beliefs in equality and freedom.

Interior decorating

I painted the visible parts of the interior a burnt orange colour to represent red oxide primer dope and picked out the framework in a light timber colour. I drew pencil lines to represent the cross-bracing wires. The instrument panel was detailed from contemporary photographs and I added a 'shelf' to the bottom of the panel. S.E.5s and '5as contained a variety of seats, ranging from a complicated adjustable affair to a plain plank from side to side. Mine became an aluminium bucket

seat because I have seen them in aircraft of this period, and that's what the moulding looked like.

Later on he was to revive the 'mock parliament' idea, and by the outbreak of war was proclaiming: "We are fighting for freedom and civilisation..." It was at this period that he met General Trenchard (later Marshal of the Royal Air Force), whom he dismissed with a diary entry:

"Talked bilge. Don't like him..." It's hard to see how such attitudes to the upper class fitted with Mannock's military interests, but later, perhaps the egalitarian atmosphere of a small RFC mess was not so far removed from a kind of Socialism before Bolshevism had made such ideas an anathema to the British ruling class.

Nose job

With the interior complete, the fuselage halves were joined. The centreline joint wasn't perfect and needed some attention, but worse than that, I was concerned that the nose just didn't look right. It was completely flat at the front, making the two cylinder banks stand up above the aircraft's profile.

I decided to build up the curve of

the nose with plasticard strip, which was then filled, and when dry sanded to the correct curved profile. I also reached the conclusion that part of this problem was that the cylinder banks were too big, so I cut off the back end of each block and shaved them as thin as possible.

Even the physical exertion of shinning up and down telegraph poles all day, combined with the RAMC and the mental stimulus of the 'mock parliament' were not enough to keep the blossoming character of the young Mannock satisfied, and his attention turned to foreign travel and the opportunities of Empire. In February 1914, Edward set sail aboard a tramp steamer and fetched up in Turkey, where he sought out the English Telephone Company, and within six months was a District Inspector.

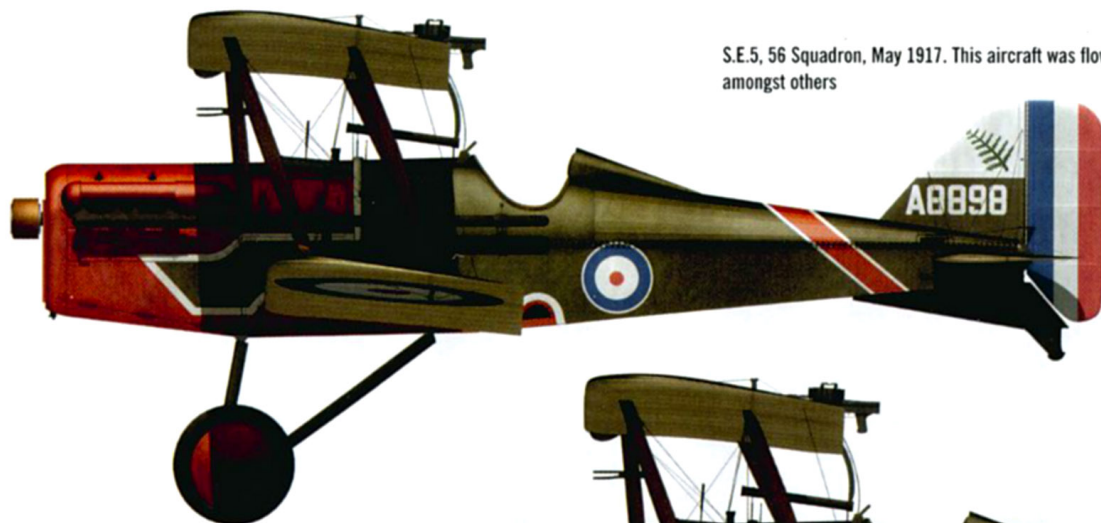
All this came crashing around his ears in August 1914, when war was declared and Turkey aligned itself with Germany...Mannock was interned. Squalid conditions soon reduced his health to the point where the Turks decided to repatriate him. Twice he was among those prisoners ready to embark, but was held back as a

punishment for singing patriotic songs during departure. Only on a third attempt was he prevailed upon to keep quiet long enough to be allowed to leave.

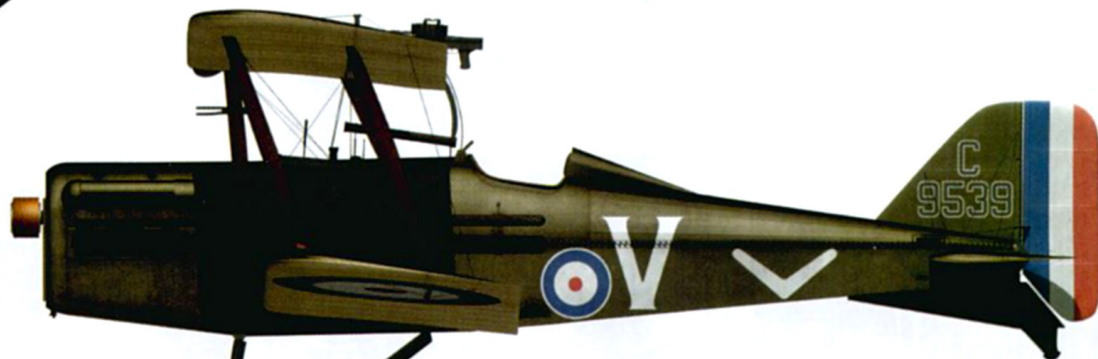
Tail-first

First of the flying surfaces to be set in place were the tailplane, fin and rudder. I separated the elevators and reset them slightly depressed. Although the control wire horns are rather thick, it is good to have them moulded as part of the model and not have to make and fix them and then worry about whether they are going to be strong enough. Next to go on was the lower wing. I do like the strength, positive fixing and ready-made dihedral that you get with a single-piece lower wing like this, although they do usually call for a bit of filling.

On reaching England, Mannock reported to his Territorial unit, was given the rank of Sergeant and posted to the 2nd/3rd Home Counties Field Ambulance Company. From here he transferred to the Royal Engineers and was promoted 2nd Lieutenant. Inspired by meeting with a friend, Mannock transferred into the Royal Flying Corps



S.E.5, 56 Squadron, May 1917. This aircraft was flown by Albert Ball, amongst others



S.E.5a, 2 Squadron. This aircraft was flown by Captain G.H. Forrest



S.E.5a, 85 Squadron. This aircraft was flown by Lt. Stuart C. Elliot, and bears in the inscription 'Crieff No.2'. It was donated by the townspeople of Crieff



S.E.5a, 85 Squadron, 1918. This aircraft was flown by Lt. John C. Rorison, and bears the inscription 'Newport Fife No.4'



S.E.5a, 2 Squadron. This aircraft was flown by Ernest Davies, who shot down four enemy aircraft whilst flying this particular machine

S.E.5a, 56 Squadron, June 1917



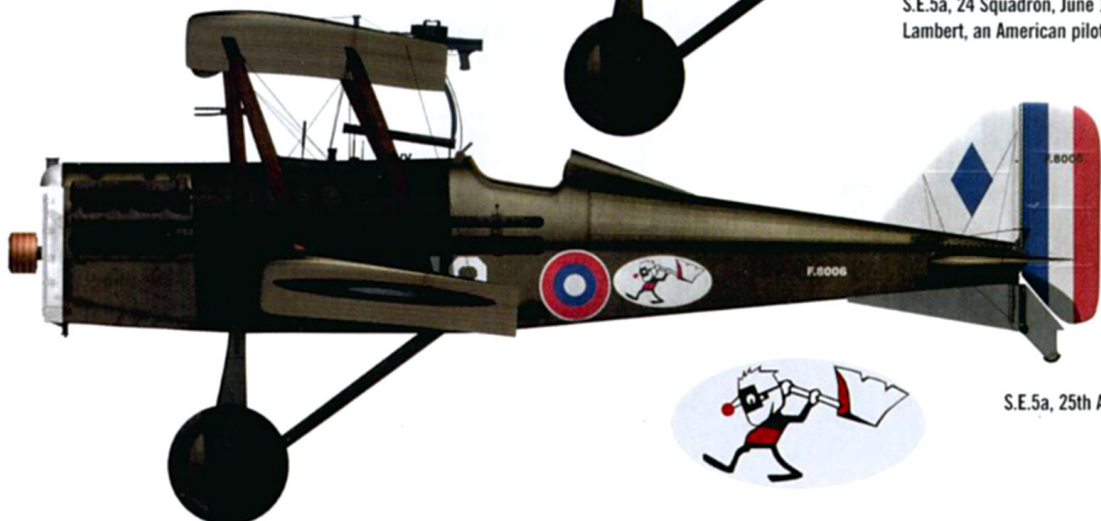
S.E.5a, 40 Squadron, 1918



S.E.5a, 56 Squadron, 1917. This aircraft was flown by Captain James McCudden

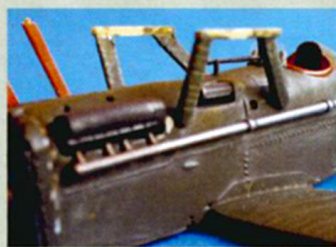


S.E.5a, 24 Squadron, June 1918. This was flown by Captain William C. Lambert, an American pilot



S.E.5a, 25th Aero Squadron USAS, Toul, France 1918

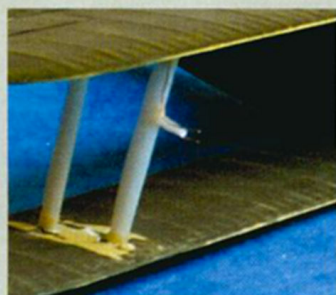




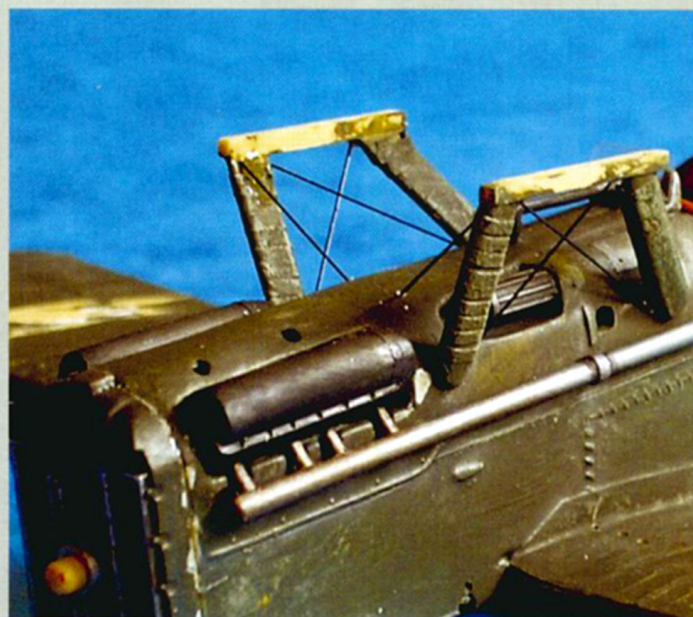
"Reluctant to tackle those interplane struts, I diverted to fitting the cylinder blocks and exhaust pipes, painted various shades of MetalCote and burnished with home-made graphite powder"



"Now it could be put off no longer. I sliced the interplane struts off, then masked-off and sanded flat the area at the base"



New interplane struts fashioned from Aeroclub extruded strut stock. The base and head of each strut were wrapped with thin masking tape to represent the metal shoes into which the struts fitted, and after installation the damaged areas of PC10 at the strut roots were made good



Cabane rigging and Vickers machine gun installed



on 1 April 1916. Aged 29, he did not easily fit in and was not a natural pilot. Several near mishaps attended his initial flight training at Hendon and a forced landing very close to a ammunition dump near Joyce Green in Kent almost ended his flying career. However, such was Mannock's determination and the need for pilots, on 6 April 1917, he was posted to No 40 Squadron at Bruay, flying the Nieuport 17.

Strutting about

I also like the fixed angle and strength of the joined-up interplane and cabane struts, which were set in place next. A bit of filing was necessary at the base of the interplane struts before they were painted. The cabane struts were wrapped around with masking tape to represent the fabric covering on the real thing.

The first couple of months of Mannock's time with 40 Sqn were even worse than his training. He was dogged by a series of mechanical failures, including losing the lower wing of his Nieuport, and his gun jammed repeatedly whilst flying missions. Added to this, Edward

Mannock was a man with the sensitive maturity to understand just what it was that opposing pilots were setting about to inflict on each other:

"Now I understand what a tremendous strain to the nervous system active service flying is." He confided to his diary.

After escorting Sopwiths on a photo-reconnaissance mission which included a fierce dogfight (in which his gun jammed, he wrote:

"...excellent photos, and two vacant chairs in the Sopwith squadron mess! What is the good of it all?"

On another occasion, his gun jammed again:

"...landed here with my knees shaking and my nerves all torn to bits... all my courage seems to have gone after that experience this morning."

And later:

"Feeling nervy and ill during the past week. Afraid I am breaking up."

A combination of these feelings and his age marking him out made many younger pilots begin to cast open doubt on Mannock's courage and abilities.

But such was his patriotic belief in the cause he was fighting for that he

was absolutely determined to overcome these problems, studying fighter tactics, manoeuvres and endlessly practising on the firing range.

The C/O of 40 Sqn saw what was happening and left Mannock alone. By the beginning of July the tide had turned and Mannock was returning with 'victories' on a regular basis.

His first tour of duty ended in January 1918 with 21 'victories' to his name and a growing reputation.

Painting Preliminaries

I decided to paint the metal panels around the engine bay at this point. I used Humbrol MetalCote polished aluminium (27002). My intention was to expose small areas of metal through a weathered PC10 finish. Small dabs of Humbrol Maskol were used to mask off chips on the edges and corners of the metal panels. These would later be rubbed off to expose the finish beneath. I also prepared the upper wing at this point, in readiness for painting the underside, along with the other undersurfaces.

As Mannock's score began to mount at 40 Sqn, so his status underwent a change and age began to work in his

favour. Younger pilots, some still in their teens, began to see him as a role model in the air and a father figure in the mess. Mannock's natural eloquence suited him for this and he was able to begin to pass on what he had so painfully learned.

Early in 1918, Major 'Grid' Caldwell was ordered to London Colney to take command of a new squadron forming and equipping with the S.E.5a. He was delighted to find Captain Edward Mannock assigned as his senior flight commander and wasted no time in exploiting his teaching talents. Lieutenant Ira Jones recalled:

"The Commanding Officer detailed Mannock to give us lectures in air fighting. And what delicious dishes of offensive spirit they were! He was a forceful, eloquent speaker, with the gift of compelling attention."

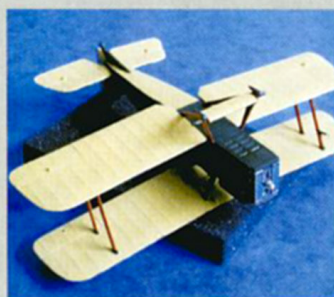
When the new 74 Squadron arrived at St Omer in March 1918, Caldwell was well pleased with his preparations:

"Now with Captain Mannock to give a lead, I felt that we might have quite a good spin when we went overseas and got up against the enemy, and so it was to be. We had five down on the first day..."

By the beginning of June 1918,



"Time now to invert the model and finish painting the areas of PC10 on the underside of the fuselage before tailskid and undercarriage were added"



Underwing roundels were applied over a coat of Johnson's Klear, and when nearly set the aileron hinge lines were cut through



Aileron control wires have been added, followed by the roundels' red centre spots



Rudder stripes were provided as a single wrap-around decal which Neil cut in two to ensure a good fit



"I removed the butt section of the Lewis gun, as photographs, including one that is probably E 1295, show that most S.E.5as were like this." Note gun's remote control wire from black-painted thin copper wire. Cockpit rim was painted tan leather and seatbelts added from masking tape

Mannock's personal score had risen to 51 and Caldwell was as impressed by his example as a patrol leader as he was by the classroom lectures:

"The great thing about Mannock was that nearly all his successes were won in front of his followers so that they could see how it was done."

Shortcomings

The undersurfaces were painted Humbrol 74 natural linen. With this complete, I tried a dry-fitting of the upper wing and another major problem began to surface. It became apparent that the upper wing did not want to meet with the top ends of the interplane struts. I tried not to worry too much, hoping that a little judicial pressure at the right moment would do the trick.

I pressed on with painting the upper surfaces in PC10. For this I used a mixture of Humbrol insignia yellow 154 and matt black 33. Contemporary photographs seem to show S.E.5as as rather a dark shade, so I kept the mix that way.

After this, sadly, it still looked as if there was a problem with those struts which pressure was not going to solve. There was no doubt about it,

the interplane struts were considerably too short.

Just to add to the problems, I noticed that my remodelling of the nose profile meant that the radiator panel also was too short.

The sad truth is that 'Mick' Mannock's personal success and reputation at 74 Sqn were won at a terrible price, for although he thoroughly mastered the martial art of biplane dogfighting, he never truly mastered the feelings and sensibilities that nearly overwhelmed him in the early days at 40 Sqn.

One of the main manifestations of this was the development of a morbid obsession with being shot down in flames. Lieutenant Jones recorded:

"Whenever he sends one down in flames he comes dancing into the mess whooping and hallooing 'Flamerinoes, boys! Sizzle, sizzle, wonk!' Then at great length, he tries to describe the feelings of the poor Hun by going into the minutest detail. Having finished in a frenzy of fiendish glee, he will turn to one of us and say, laughing, 'That's what will happen to you on the next patrol my lad.'"

Overcoming shortcomings

Always one to solve the easy problems first, I lengthened the radiator panel with a plasticard strip and painted it PC10 to match the bodywork. Still reluctant to tackle those interplane struts, and desperately thinking of easy ways to do it, I diverted to fitting the starboard and port cylinder banks and exhaust pipes. These were painted various shades of Metal Cote and then burnished with home-made graphite powder from a 6b pencil.

Now it could be put off no longer. I simply sliced the interplane struts off. The area at the base was then masked off and sanded flat.

I took another break now and installed the cabane rigging and the Vickers machine gun, having cut a cartridge ejector slot.

Then it was back to the strut problem. I used extruded strut stock from Aeroclub. Having selected the suitable thickness and using the old struts as a rough guide, I stepped-off the length and cut four new struts and shaped the ends. The base and head of each strut was fitted with thin masking tape to represent the metal shoes into which the struts fitted. I then tried another dry-fitting to check things out.

Ah, that's better!

I also added a scratchbuilt pitot head to the forward starboard strut. Happy again, I quickly fixed the upper wing in place and painted the struts. The damaged areas of PC10 at the strut roots were then made good.

The kind of behaviour recorded by Ira Jones, coupled to Mannock's famous remark on hearing of the demise of Von Richthofen, "I hope he roasted all the way down," has led some writers to label him as a victim of the racist propaganda proliferated by both sides in the conflict. Those who knew him better recognised that whilst he strongly believed in his cause, these manifestations were largely a mask for his own troubled state and a bolster to his own lack of real aggression. After a visit to the wreckage of one victory, he wrote, "I felt exactly like a murderer."

Towards the end of his tour with 74 Sqn. he wrote to his sister:

"These times are so horrible that occasionally I feel that life is not worth hanging on to myself..."

It was clear that it was time for Captain Edward Mannock to be rested, but it was not to be.



Down Under

Time now to invert the model and finish painting the areas of PC10 on the underside of the fuselage before the tailskid and structural elements of the undercarriage were added. Decaling began with the lower wing underside roundels which were applied over a coat of Johnson's Klear. When the roundels were nearly set the line of the ailerons was traced and cut through with a scalpel, so that the decal set into the join. The aileron control wires were added at this point. The red centre spots were slipped on next, and the lower wing sealed with a coat of Klear.

After a brief leave in Birmingham, newly promoted Major Edward Mannock was returned to St Omer, this time to replace W A 'Billy' Bishop as Commanding Officer of No 85 Squadron.

Bishop was essentially a 'lone wolf' and was withdrawn to take part in the formation of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Mannock's known teaching and leadership skills were sought to bring cohesion and fighting efficiency to 85 Sqn. This he certainly did but at the cost of the

return of all his personal demons.

On 25 July 1918, Mannock was being the rather forced life and soul of the party in the mess. In the midst of the jollity he suddenly turned and asked the New Zealand newcomer Lieutenant Donald Inglis, "Have you got a Hun yet, Inglis?" To the reply "No, Sir" Mannock was on his feet urging the young man to "Come out and we'll get one."

The resulting foray was abortive, since Inglis' machine developed a control fault and could not take off, whilst Mannock himself returned empty handed but vowing to take the young man up again at dawn the following morning.

Last lap

The rudder stripes were provided as a single wrap-around decal, and I was concerned that it would not be wide enough in this form, so I cut it in two. The two halves went on OK and the remainder of the decaling went without snags.

I removed the butt section of the Lewis gun before giving it a test fitting. Photographs, including one that is probably E 1295, seem to show that most S.E.5as were like this. I also

added a remote control wire to the Lewis gun. This was from thin copper wire, painted black.

I had added scratchbuilt windscreen brackets earlier and now cut a clear PVC screen to attach to them. The cockpit opening lining was painted tan leather and I added seatbelts from pre-painted masking tape.

The model was rigged with long synthetic paintbrush bristles in my version of the stretched sprue technique, then I finished the whole airframe with a thinned coat of Humbrol matt acrylic varnish.

In many ways this is a very nice kit, with particularly good surface detail. Unfortunately, the nose profile, interplane struts and other smaller problems mean that it doesn't build from the box. I shall probably do the sensible thing and get my next S.E.5a from the Roden stable. I won't get a 1/48 kit for £3.99 though! Perhaps I'll stick with 1/72.

It was just after 5.00 a.m when Mannock and Inglis left the mess to climb into their S.E.5as and headed off towards Merville. Mannock saw the Junkers Cl.I first and banked to the attack. Inglis takes up the story:

"...Major Mannock turned and got in a good burst when he pulled away. I got in a good burst at very close range, after which the E.A. (Enemy Aircraft) went into a slow left-hand spiral with flames coming out of his right side. I watched him go straight into the ground..."

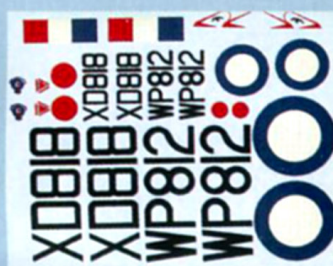
In doing all this, both novice and experienced pilot had committed the cardinal error of following their victim down to within range of ground fire. One eyewitness reckoned that Mannock was no more than 40 feet off the treetops. A line of tracer snaked up from a German machine gun post in the support line. It entered Mannock's S.E.5a on the starboard side, just behind the engine. Flame and belching black smoke followed swiftly. Eyewitness accounts vary as to how long it took Mannock to hit the ground and explode. Thus perished Major 'Mick' Mannock — in the manner he feared most. It was just 99 days before the Armistice. Inglis' machine was holed in the petrol tank, but he survived a forced landing behind friendly lines.

SAMI



Vickers Valiant

Scale: 1/72 Kit No: 7236
Price: £46.40 Panel Lines: Recessed
Status: New Tooling
Type: Injection Moulded Plastic
Parts: Plastic 100, Clear 2 Decal Options: 6
Manufacturer: Mach 2 UK Importer: Hannants



He Who Would Valiant Be...

No foes stayed his might, as Tony Gloster laboured night and day to build Mach 2's Vickers Valiant (with apologies to John Bunyan)

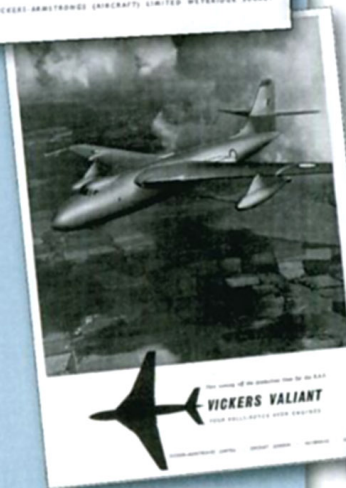
Two sprues of white plastic are crammed inside the large top-opening box. As you may expect for a limited-run kit, there is a fair bit of flash and heavy sprue gates. These are not a problem, but the overall quality of the moulding is. It's poor, with heavy pitting on the lower wings, port fuselage and fin. There are also a large

number of marks that appear to be where the moulds have cracked. Most of the smaller parts such as the flying controls and various ancillary bits are mis-moulded and unusable. But it's not all doom and gloom. Panel lines are recessed. There are very nicely detailed main undercarriage assemblies, wheel bays and doors, and the same goes for the cockpit. The canopy is injection

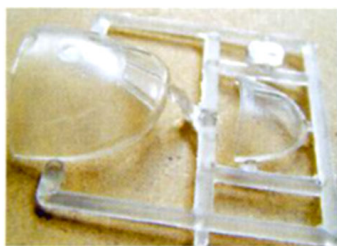
moulded, but in somewhat thick and none-too-clear plastic. The instructions are basic to say the least, with construction taking up just one side of the A4 sheet and colour schemes and decal placement on the other.

Construction

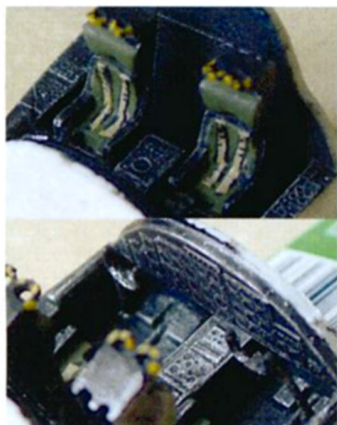
With no numbered steps in the instructions it's up to you what sequence the build will take. The first thing I did



Contemporary adverts (Mike Jerram Collection)



The canopy and the kits Achilles heel



The cockpit comes up very nicely indeed

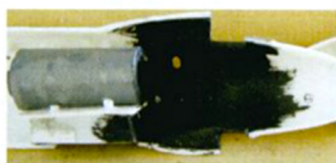


All the sub-assemblies ready to go, note the filled in panel lines

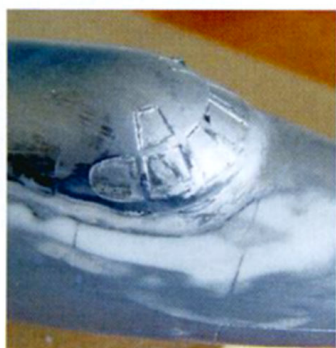
was to deal with the pitting and removing those 'cracks'. Once that had been done and all surfaces rubbed down and mating surfaces cleaned up I started on the sub-assemblies. The problems started here with the two three-part intakes, which needed a lot of filler and smoothing down. They were not a bad fit into the wings, but filler was needed at the front where they meet the wing. At this stage the detailed wheel bays



The simple, but well designed decal sheet



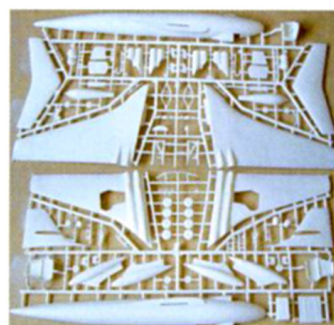
The internal parts ready to go, lead was added, just in case of tail sitting



My best attempts at making the canopy blend in to the fuselage

were also fitted. The trailing-edges of the wings were in need of some attention, and another problem that cropped up when dry-fitting the wings was that the upper starboard panel is 2 mm shorter at the tip than the lower. More filler!

The tailplane is somewhat thick in comparison to photos of the real thing, and should be thinned, but with the knock-on effect of having to rework the fin to fit, so I left it as moulded. Talking of the fin, comparing it to photos in Barry Jones' book *V-Bombers* published by Crowood Press, it looks a tad too tall and broad. While you are working on this you might as well replace the vortex



Hard to believe, but there's a Valiant on just the two spurs



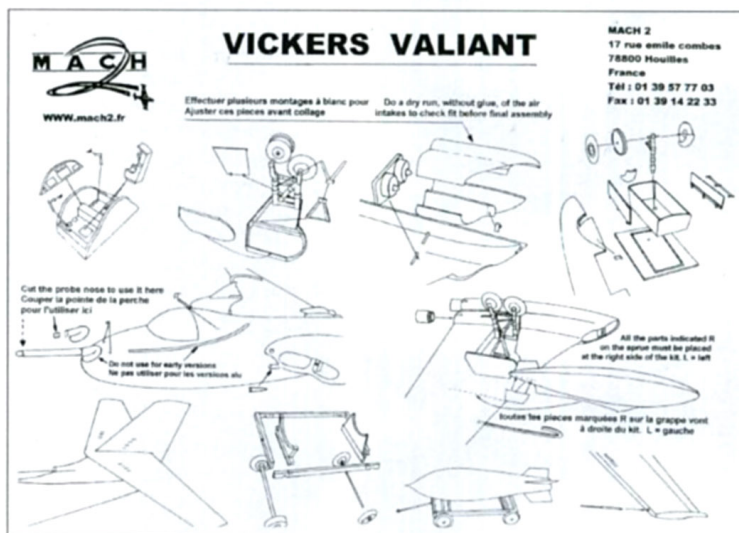
The reluctant fuselage, in the end became compliant



On close inspection, the quality of the moulding is not so good



A lot of work and filler was needed to get the intakes to an acceptable standard



The instructions do however tell you all you need to know to fit it all together

generators as they are oversize, as they are on the wings.

Next up was the cockpit. In marked contrast to the intakes, it comes with nice detail on the side and centre panels. The seats are quite good, looking the part when painted, and harnesses were added from Tamiya tape. New control columns and handles were scratchbuilt, and at this stage the two side windows just behind and below the cockpit were cut out. No clear parts are supplied for them so Humbrol's Clearfix was used to fill the apertures.

When the fuselage halves were mated together it became very apparent that the starboard side was badly warped, requiring clamps and a lot of tape to get it to fit. Once that had been done it turned out that the seats would not fit in the cockpit space, being too high, but you can't see a thing through the canopy anyway. The best solution would be to

replace them with Aeroclub's Martin Baker Mk 3s, which will fit snugly in the space.

Normally with an 'out of the box' build I do as little extra work as possible so that you, the readers, can get an impression of just what you get for your hard-earned cash, but in this case I chose to fill in all the panel lines, as the real aircraft had an extremely smooth finish. When the wings were offered up to the fuselage there was a large gap (3 mm) on the upper surface of both wings, though the underside joints were OK. The fin (which is a butt joint) and the tailplane fitted with no major issues.

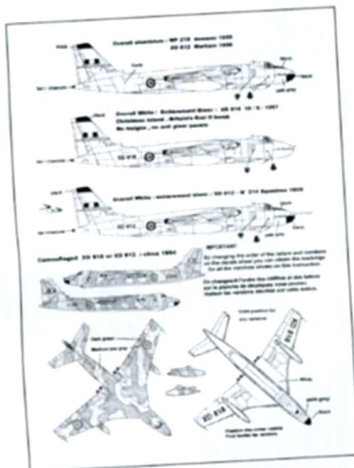
As a limited-run kit all of the above is not unexpected and can be overcome with a little time and effort. It's the canopy that really lets the kit down, having but a passing resemblance to that of the Valiant. The shape of its main panels is more akin to that of the



Short S.A.4 Sperrin. But what to do? Major reworking of the canopy or making a vacform replacement would seem to be the only alternatives. As it stands it sticks out like a sore thumb, as well as bringing into question the profile of the model from the cockpit forwards. Though I have no scale plans against which to check it, it just does not look right to me. On a more positive note, Mach 2 supply the two underwing fuel tanks, refuelling probes (short or long) and a *Blue Danube* atomic bomb and its trolley.

Colour Options

Three: WP218 circa 1955 (the subject of my build) and XD812 based at RAF Marham in 1956, both in overall matt aluminium finish; XD818 of 49 Sqn from the Christmas Island H-bomb tests in 1957 which is now undergoing



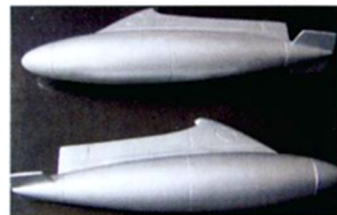
Colour and decal options



Blue Danube H-bomb; I have no idea as to what colour it's meant to be, so it got a coat of Humbrol US Dark Green (#116)



The spare parts supplied with the kit and the miss moulded smaller parts



The unused under wing fuel tanks



restoration at RAF Cosford after spells on display at RAF Marham and the RAF Museum Hendon, and XD812 of 214 Sqn in 1959, both in overall white; and XD812 and XD818 in the camouflage finish of grey/green uppersurfaces and white undersides circa 1964. The decals are well printed, if a little thick, but they settled down well with the aid of Micro Sol. As far as I can ascertain there was very little stencilling on the Valiant, and none is supplied on the decal sheet.

Now here I have to apologise to

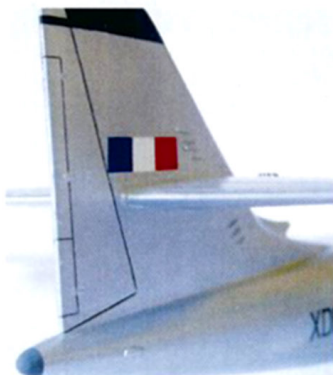
Mach-2, because the roundels and fin flashes on my model are from Hannants Xtradecal sheet X037-48, as when I sprayed the finishing coat of Humbrol matt from a can it bloomed something rotten, requiring it to be stripped off, and taking the decals with it. Oh, bother! This left only the spare serial numbers XD818 and the danger stencil. By rights I should have replaced all the decals or repainted the whole thing in white or camouflage, but I felt that I should use at least some of the supplied decals and I liked the silver finish, so please don't write in. I know it's wrong, but it must be said the Hannants decals have a much better colour.

Conclusion

Apart from the old FROG 1/96 scale kit from the 1950s, this is the only

injection-moulded Valiant of which I'm aware, and I very much doubt anyone else will mould one soon. (I think Lincoln International/Kadar did one in a 'fits the box scale' in the late 1950s. Ed.) This kit is a challenge, with the poor moulding and fit problems. But it is a short-run kit, and with work — a lot of work — it can be made into a very accomplished Valiant. It has some nice touches, such as the main undercarriage assemblies, and the number of optional parts that enable you to build the Valiant throughout its service life. The one thing that lets it down in a major way is that awful canopy. That said, for V-bomber fans (nothing will stop them buying it), it will be a rewarding and enjoyable project.

SAMI



Held at the Oktoberhallen in Wieze, 30 September-1 October. Didier Waelkens photo report.

SAMI



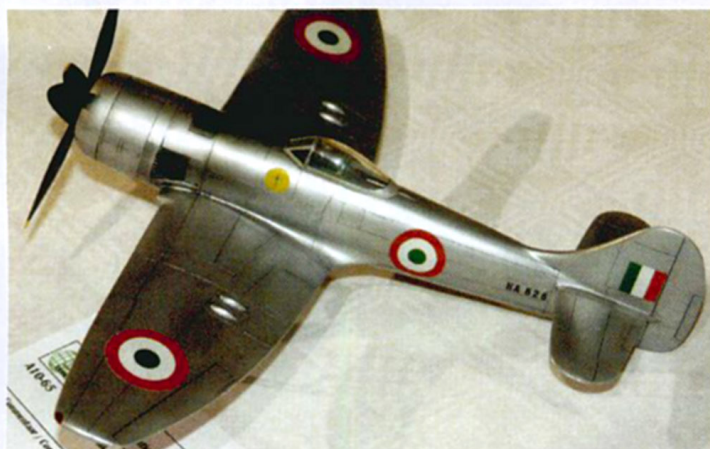
Another diorama Gold medal went to this 1/72 scale Heinkel He 112 V3 built by Christian Breuning. The RS kit has an Airwaves interior and many scratchbuilt items

IPMS Belgium

National Convention 2006



Time for a new paint job? This 1/72 Breguet 470 was the work of Jean-Claude Guéll and won Gold in the 'Aviation Vacu & Scratch' category. The starting point was an Airfix C-47 fuselage which was modified then the remainder was scratchbuilt



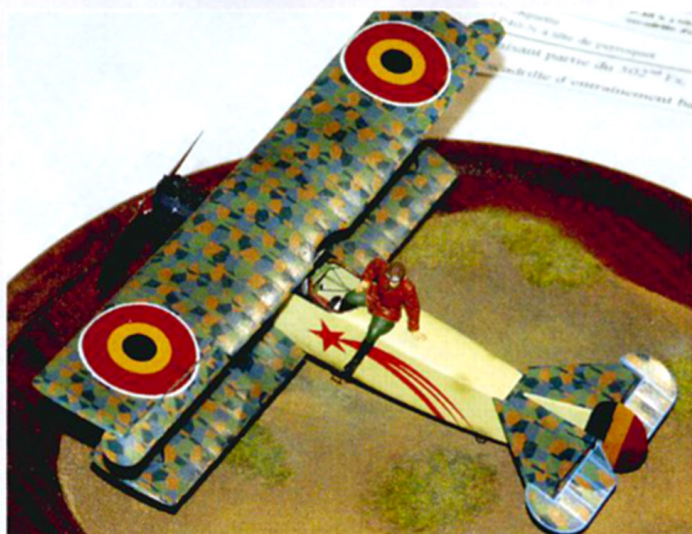
Christian 'Full Metal Jacket' Page struck again with this Hawker Tempest II of No 10 Sqn, Indian Air Force in 1948, winning Gold in the 'Aviation Conversion' category. The model is a mix of the 1/48 scale Hobbycraft Sea Fury and the Eduard Tempest V kits



Wilfried Van De Vel took Gold with his 1/48 scale Accurate Miniatures B-25C Mitchell 'Dirty Dora'. The kit was upgraded with Aires parts



In the 'Aviation Diorama' category, Philippe Spriesterbach's 'Last Briefing', featuring a Nieuport 16 armed with Le Prieur rockets, was awarded a Gold medal and the IPMS Belgium Challenge trophy. The Nieuport is from Eduard while the figures are highly modified Preiser WWII Luftwaffe pilots



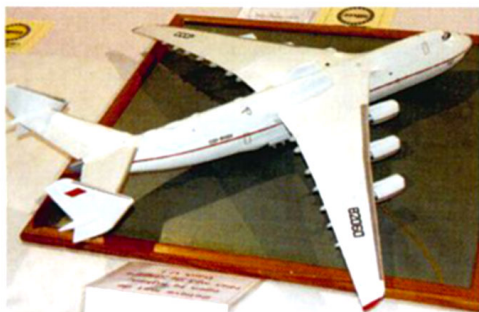
Daniel Clamot's 1/48 Fokker D.VII of the Belgian Military Aviation 10th Squadron won a Gold medal in the 'Military aviation propellers 1/48' category. The PJ Productions' WWI pilot adds some realism to the Dragon model



In the 'Civil Aviation Larger than 1/144' category, Philippe Lacrosse won Bronze with his Sabena Boeing 707-329C



A Silver Swiss wins Silver! This Junkers Ju 86Z-2 flown by the Swiss Air Lines company was built by Christian Breuning from the 1/72 Revell and Italeri kits. After rescribing, the aircraft was sprayed with Testors metallizer aluminium and then, lightly polished to create natural metal colour effects from aluminium to steel blue



Take two Revell 1/144 scale Antonov An-124s, do some 'cut-and-paste', add some scratchbuilding and you end up with a big Antonov An-225 Mriya. This model gained Silver for Michel Anciaux in the 'Aviation Conversion' category



The beautiful silver paint job on this Classic Airframes 1/48 Gloster Meteor F.8 was appropriately awarded a Silver medal in the 'Military Aviation Jets 1/48' category. Henri Vanderstraeten selected an aircraft of the Belgian Air Force 7th Wing/9th Squadron in the early 1950s



No, not another Silver Swiss: this 1/72 Junkers F-13 built by Christian Deliens sports a registration from the State of Danzig. It won a Silver Medal



There were not many entries in the 'Aviation Larger than 1/35' category, but this IAF F-4 Phantom 'Sledgehammer' was an eyecatcher. Built by Nico Vanbrabant, it won a Silver medal



This former East German Air Force 1/48 Mil M-1 built by Markus Wilczek took bronze in the 'Rotary Wing' category



Quite some work went into this 1/48 Mirage 2000D-R2 of the French Air Force EC 3/3 Ardennes squadron built by Wilfried Van De Vel, who won a Silver medal and two more special trophies. It was based on the Heller Mirage 2000N kit converted to a D model



Johan Detruyer won Gold with his Revell Hawker Hunter F.6 in the 'Military Aviation Jets 1/72 and Smaller' category. The model depicts a Belgian Air Force 9th Wing/22nd Squadron aircraft from the late 1950s

Jagdwgeschwader 51 'Mölders'

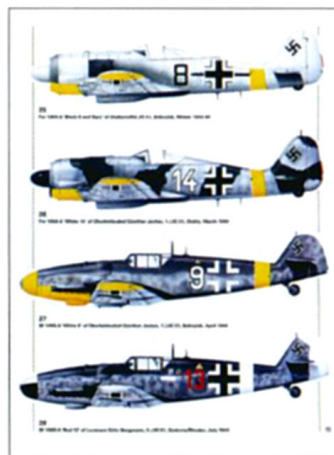
BOOK OF THE MONTH

JG 51 was one of the Luftwaffe's top wartime fighter units, yet its story has never been told in English. The unit's history encapsulates the fortunes of the Luftwaffe's fighter arm as a whole - the heady successes of the early months, the steady attrition and the growing strength of the opposition during the mid-war years, and the final chaos and collapse of the last days. But it is perhaps the details of the pilots who served with the unit that sets JG 51 apart. During the course of the war it numbered more Knight's Cross winners among its ranks than any other. And it is their stories - their successes, exploits and eventual fates - that bring this history to life.



TECHNICAL DATA

Aviation Elite Units 22 Price: £13.99
By: John Weal Illustrated by John Weal
Publisher: Osprey ISBN: 1846030455
Format: Paperback; 128 pages



Another sumptuous work from Osprey, brimming with information and extraordinary colour plates. This is a must for the modeller and enthusiast alike.

Andy Evans

SAMI

Aeroguide 34 Canberra PR.9

TECHNICAL DATA

by Roger Chesneau Price: £14.95
Publisher: Ad Hoc ISBN: 0-9469-5849-1
Format: 210 mm x 297 mm, 56 pages
Cover: Softback

Aeroguides set the standard for modellers' reference books, and the new format and updated design and layout have simply made them better than ever. The only fault I am able to find is the folding scale plans in the centre pages, which I dare not open out for the sure and certain knowledge that they will, in short order, become dog-eared to the extent that they will not fold neatly away again. All that seems to have been



gained by their inclusion is, unnecessarily in my view, to allow the colour profiles to be presented bigger.

Anyone familiar with the series will know what to expect. Newcomers look forward to being agreeably surprised at the depth and quality of the data provided. The word 'walk-around' simply doesn't do it justice. It's a walk-around, a crawl under, a squint down upon the top of, and a poke your nose, into all rolled into one, with history and scale plans thrown in for good measure.

Given its lingering role, the PR.9 has been neglected for too long. Let's hope we get a decent kit soon.

Bob Ranger

SAMI

WEEAC Navigator

Modelling Revell's Phantom FGR.2

Price: £4.95

The latest disc from WEEAC shows the building of Revell's British Phantom,

and as this kit is a reissue of the Hasegawa Phantom family this disc will also be useful if you have one of those on your 'to do' pile.

With this release WEEAC have improved on their previous offering in a number of areas. As usual we start with the Construction section, which uses 89 photographs combined with informative text in a stage-by-stage build. The next two sections are Gallery and

Profiles. The first gets up close to the completed model and shows the high

standard to which it was built. The second focuses on it from various angles.

Next up is a new section called 'Gate Guard' which supplies 48 walk-around photographs of FGR.2 XV500 on display at RAF St Athan. This aircraft served with Nos 23, 29, 54, 56 and 111 squadrons before being retired to St Athan in 1992, where it did a tour of duty guarding the HQ building from marauding seagulls until late in the decade, when, for some unaccountable reason, it was repainted in 92 Sqn colours as 'XV498'.

One of the bonuses on previous discs was the How To section which WEEAC called 'Directions'. On this disc you get all the information from the preceding discs combined. Hints and tips cover adding detail, dry-brushing, colour washes, working with resin and brass, decaling, metal finishes,

weathering and dealing with transparencies.

I have been a big fan of these discs from the outset, and WEEAC are to be congratulated on their policy of continual evolution. The additional section makes this CD-ROM the perfect one-stop reference guide to building a RAF Phantom.

The WEEAC Navigator range is available direct from the publisher at 13 Island Farm Close, Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan CF31 3LY, and can be viewed at www.weeac.co.uk

The next releases will cover Hasegawa's F-14 Tomcat and two separate discs on their Messerschmitt Bf 109 family.

DF

SAMI



The Last Flight of the L48

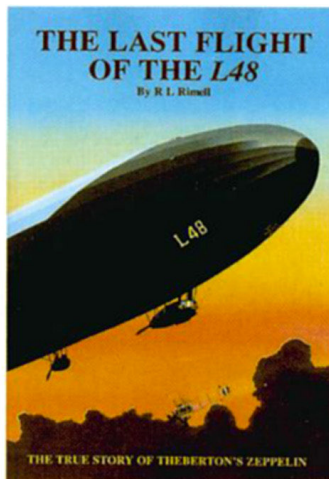
TECHNICAL DATA

by Ray L Rimell
Publisher: Albatros Productions
Format: 24 pages, Softback

This slim volume focuses on the eventful flight of the 'U' Class Zeppelin L48 on 16/17 June 1917 when it attempted to raid London and was shot down in flames. The first part of the book gives a brief overview of the evolution of the Zeppelin as an offensive weapon and the early bombing campaign against Britain. However, the bulk of the material focuses on the development of the "height climber" Zeppelins, the German Navy's response to the increasingly effective British defences. It then turns to the details of that June raid in which L48 participated, describing this in

some detail with eyewitness accounts from both sides (including the three lucky survivors of the destruction of L48). There are plenty of contemporary photographs, including many of L48 and other Zeppelins, and two pages of photographs taken at the crash site. There are also colour profiles of the three aircraft that participated in the destruction of L48: an F.E.2b, a D.H.2 and a B.E.12. Finally, there is a page of photographs from a recent archaeological dig at Theberton, the site of the final demise of L48.

This volume is something of a mixed bag. Although it is well written and the narrative is interesting, it offers nothing new. The bulk of this volume is in fact a slightly edited version of Chapter 13 of Ray Rimell's 1984 book, *Zeppelin*. This is now out of print so it is understandable that the author may



feel it appropriate to republish extracts, but most serious enthusiasts will already have this work or will track it

down through second-hand sources. For the reader seeking an introduction to the Zeppelin campaign, this volume focuses too much on the events of a single raid to give enough of an overall perspective. There is not much for the modeller here either: unlike the recent *Zeppelin Special*, there is nothing of real interest for modellers apart from a 1/720 scale drawing of L48 which includes some 1/96 scale drawings of the gondolas. I suspect this volume has been published to tie in to the BBC *Timewatch* programme about the dig at the Theberton crash site in 2006. Consequently, although I would normally unreservedly recommend any publication by this author, this volume is of very limited interest to both early aviation enthusiasts and modellers.

Nigel Rayner

SAMI _____

Walk Around 42: Messerschmitt Me 262

TECHNICAL DATA

by Hans Heiri Stapler Price: £13.95
Publisher: Squadron/Signal
ISBN: 0-8974-7500-3
Format: 210 mm x 298 mm, 80 pp, Softback

Walk-around books come and go. Two series remain. Aeroguides and Squadron/Signal. This is typical of the latter in that it has everything the enthusiast or the modeller needs to know or see, including detail shots of preserved examples.

If you don't want to make a kit, the captions are readable and interesting and turn it into more than



a reference book.

Essential to the modeller, but simply a good read too.

Gunther Lingner

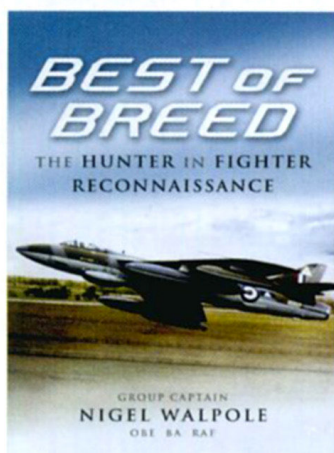
SAMI _____

Photo Reconnaissance Hunters

TECHNICAL DATA

By: Group Captain Nigel Walpole Price: £20.00
Publisher: Pen and Sword Books
ISBN: 1844154122
Format: Hardback, 246 x 172mm

If you want the inside track on flying tactical reconnaissance in the RAF Hawker Hunter FR.10, and its front line operations, then this is the book for you! With the Hunter already well proven in the ground attack role, this variant was an ideal platform for the excellent Vinten F95 strip aperture cameras. The heavy armament of four 30-mm Aden cannon was retained for use in defence suppression and target marking, as well as against high value targets, and if necessary in self-defence. The pilots selected for this demanding operating regime were by necessity 'old heads' and had to show an ability to operate alone over long distances using basic pilot navigation techniques at high speeds and ultra low levels. The author brings to life this fascinating aspect of



one of the graceful Hunter's many RAF roles, and backs this up with some excellent personal archive photographs that show the aircraft at its best. This is a must for the Hunter enthusiast, and a great source of background information for the modeller.

Andy Evans

SAMI _____

Ilyushin Il-2 Shturmovik

TECHNICAL DATA

Publisher: 4+ Price: £14.95
ISBN: 8-0870-4500-9
Format: 207 mm x 298 mm, 42 pp, Softback

A real modeller's book! Now that the Czech Republic has become the centre of the modelling universe, it is only right that it should produce reference books of a similar quality to its kits. The impression one gets with any 4+ book is that they have crammed information into every available space, and thus give excellent value for money. They manage to achieve this without the book becoming in any way inelegant, so the casual reader can benefit from the title, as well as the dedicated modeller.

This title deals with a convoluted subject, and manages to demystify the Stormovik admirably, covering the Il-2 Types 3 and 3M, Il-2KR and the UTI-2. 1/72 scale plans are included, as well as plenty of data covering weapons and stores.



With history and notes, walk-around shots, colour profiles, plans and a great many historical pictures all crammed into a very manageable format, 4+'s books constitute some of the best value publications currently around.

Ian Wood

SAMI _____

Fairey Firefly in Action

TECHNICAL DATA

by W A Harrison Price: £9.70
Publisher: Squadron/Signal ISBN: 0-8974-7501-1
Format: 210 mm x 297 mm, 50 pages
Cover: Softback

No book on the Firefly can warrant a bad word, as for me it has to be one of the most dashing aircraft ever. This aside, I wish it wasn't in landscape format, and I wish I hadn't seen the Warpaint title on the aircraft first, otherwise I would have been able to pronounce it second to none.

Pictorial coverage is excellent, and the two pages of profiles are nicely done. The history is interesting and informative, and



while I found the book on the whole to be excellent, it doesn't bring an awful lot new to the party.

But if you like the format and collect the series, the content is excellent.

GH

SAMI _____

F-117 Nighthawk – Photo Scrapbook

TECHNICAL DATA

By: Yancy D Mailles & Tony R Landis
 Publisher: Speciality Press ISBN: 1-580007-099-X
 Price: £11.99

Show a non-enthusiast some aircraft photographs and they can normally identify three aircraft – Concorde, the Boeing 747 and the F-117 Stealth Fighter. This is how well known the distinctive faceted shape has become. But it was not always so, in fact in the early days of the stealth program every thing about the programme was secret,

so secret that even the coffee mugs with the project's code name 'Have Blue' and the picture of a cloud with a skunk tail had to be locked in a safe when they were not in use!

Many of the large number of photographs used in this book to illustrate the early days of the programme have never been published before and for that reason are of great interest. But if this book has a flaw it is that the aircraft's war service is surprisingly overlooked, and there is only one picture showing mission markings and



only one example of the artwork applied to the bomb bay doors of many

F-117s during the Gulf wars.

Despite this minor criticism I found the book an inspiring read and it will make a good reference for anyone building Tamiya's or Hasegawa's F-117s, especially if you want to paint correctly the many shades of black seen on a service aircraft, or are looking for a scheme that is that little bit different from the rest.

DF

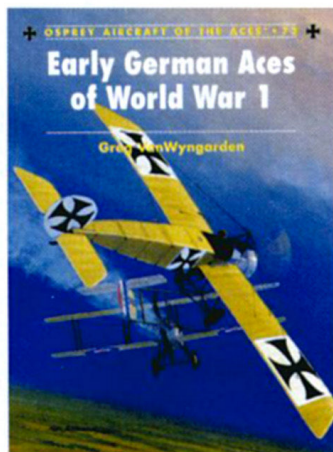
SAMI

Early German Aces of World War I

TECHNICAL DATA

Aircraft of the Aces Series No 73
 By: Greg Van Wyngarden Price: £12.99
 Publisher: Osprey ISBN: 1841769975
 Format: Paperback; 96 pages

The Fokker Eindecker (monoplane) started the true age of fighter aviation. With the development of its revolutionary synchronised machine gun system, the Eindecker caused consternation in the ranks of Allied airmen as its pilots began to reap a grim harvest of victims in 1915. The exploits of aces like Max Immelmann and Oswald Boelke became legendary on both sides of the front, and they received the adulation of the German public, along with such honours as the first awards of the Orden Pour le Mérite (the 'Blue Max') to airmen. These men created the tactics and principles of German fighter aviation as they did so. By the final months of 1916, the monoplanes had been replaced by the next generation of biplane fighters from Fokker and Halberstadt flying together in new fighter formations – the



Jagdstaffeln. This book charts the successes of the 'lone hunters' of 1915 until their eventual replacement. A fantastic work, just overflowing with interest for the modeller and enthusiast alike, and bringing the harsh reality of the early days of aerial warfare vividly to life

SAMI

Aviascope 2 Mirage F1/B/C/CT

TECHNICAL DATA

by Christophe Verdoux Price: 19 Euros
 Publisher: Avia Editions ISBN: 2-9150-3011-1
 Format: 210 mm x 297 mm, 40 pp, Softback

Books like this are the perfect tool for modellers who want to model, and not to wade through reams of dry text and wobbly black-and-white images trying to sift out the practical data. It's bilingual French/English, but as text is limited to extremely brief captions, the amount of space thus compromised is minimal.

It's perfect for the modeller who doesn't care what 'that folding bit' does, but just wants to know its shape and colour.

Andrew Lammy

SAMI



Sea Eagles Volume Two

TECHNICAL DATA

By: Chris Goss Price: £16.99
 Publisher: Classic Colours ISBN: 1-903223-56-3

The second and final volume in Classic Colours' Sea Eagles series details the operations of the Luftwaffe anti-shipping units between 1942 and 1945. This book follows the tried and tested format used by Classic Colours in all their books, mixing historical text with personal recollections. The text is complemented by a selection of period colour and black-and-white photographs and a selection of colour side profiles that illustrate well the interesting schemes carried by maritime aircraft. As is pointed out in the foreword the colour notes of aircraft camouflage do include some best guesses and might have been, so are subject to alternative interpretations of the black-and-white photographs.

The history starts with the Anti-shipping units approaching their peak and the introduction of the large four-engined Condor and Greif. It then charts the decline of the anti-shipping units as the fortunes of war turned against the Third Reich, despite the introduction of more efficient radar systems and improved weaponry.



The aircraft that bore the brunt of the operations were the Ju 88 and 188 but also featured are the He 111, Fw 200 and He 177. I am hoping that some decal manufacturer gets inspiration from this book, as we are long overdue sheets for Trumpeter's Fw 200 and MPM's He 177.

This book is recommended to any one with an interest in the Luftwaffe or those seeking some attractive markings for German bombers.

DF

SAMI

Aviascope 3 Jaguar A/E

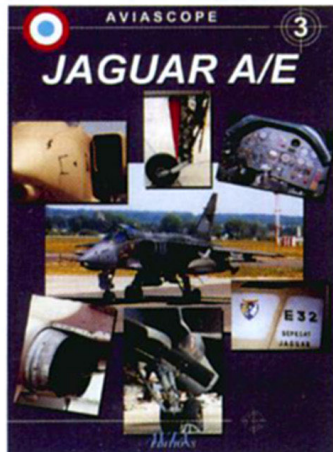
TECHNICAL DATA

by Thierry Metz Price: 19 Euros
 Publisher: Avia Editions
 ISBN: 2-9150-3013-8
 Format: 207 mm x 297 mm, 40 pp, Softback

I am not generally a fan of books in foreign tongues, even when captions and text are bilingual, but in the case of a book like this the text is almost incidental and thus largely immaterial. Monsieur Metz has excelled himself with a collection of photographs that covers the aircraft from top to toe and leaves no stone – or flap or maintenance hatch – unturned, which makes the book a perfect piece of reference material for the modeller engaged in superdetailing any Jaguar kit.

Both A and E variants are covered in depth, although it would have been nice to see the M included as well. Pleasingly, weapons and stores are also covered – an important and often neglected area.

Some lip-service is paid to markings,



but that's not really what this book is about, and if you want profiles you will have to look elsewhere. But for a really first-class, close-up look at the Jaguar in French service, this book is spot-on.

Marcus Brown

SAMI

Letter of the Month Competition

Revell UK are offering a monthly prize for Readers' Letter of the Month.



Congratulations to this month's winner of the Revell 'Letter of the Month Competition'. Mr Lee receives a selection of paints from the new Revell Aqua Color range.

Send Your Letters To...

Please send your comments, questions and feedback to the editorial address, clearly marked 'Feedback'.

Readers' Feedback

The views expressed in this column are not necessarily those of SAM Publications. Readers' address details must be supplied but we will only publish them if the letter is considered to be a request for assistance or further correspondence from the readership.

This page will be used to publish letters we receive from the readership that relate to articles previously published in this magazine. These letters will add to, update or revise such articles.

FLIR flipped

LETTER OF THE MONTH

I was very impressed with the work that David Francis did on the Trumpeter A-7E, but I did want to pass along one note about the use of the FLIR pod.

Not all A-7Es were converted to be compatible with the big FLIR pod, usually the aircraft in only one of two squadrons in a typical Carrier Air Wing. Those aircraft so converted could only use the FLIR pod on one stores pylon, the starboard inboard station. David has the pod on his model under the port wing; he may want to swap it with the 300 US gallon droptank on the opposite side to be more faithful to the actual service use of the pod. Four of six stores stations (outer and inner, but not centre pylon on each wing) were configured as



'wet' stations, able to carry droptanks, so use of the pod limited the number of external tanks that could be carried to a total of three.

Bill Lee, US Navy Retired
via email

David Francis replies: Bill, you are of course quite right about the FLIR pod,

but in my defence I have a photograph in World Air Power Journal of a 'Blue Jays' SLUF with the store on the port inner station. After reading your email I looked closer at the picture and think it has been laterally reversed, swapping the store to the wrong side. Who says photographs do not lie?

'Retrotranslator' translated

Regarding AModel's An-26PP/PT/Z Retrotranslator (News Update, SAMI May 2006), during the period of the Cold War the Soviet and some other Warsaw Pact Air Forces operated a variety of transport and helicopter types including the An-26 on various communications related duties — ELINT, SIGINT, Battlefield Control and Command, Radio Relay, Electronic and

Communications Warfare — usually with an array of aeries about the fuselage.

'Retrotranslator' would seem a quite literal translation into English of such an aircraft's designated use: translating intercepted signals and turning them back or around.

But, maybe not.

Des Brennan
via email

Aftermarket wish list

I do not know what influence you have with the aftermarket industry, but I have a wish list that I would like to share with you:

- A corrected part No B-15 for the ESCI/Amtech/Italeri Henschel Hs 123. This is the forward upper fuselage, and instead of the inwardly punched louvres, there are two rows of blobs. Also, the weapons troughs are much too long.
- 1/48 scale .303 Brownings (the ones with the slots and the flash suppressors) suitable for the Lancaster, Defiant, Hudson and others which languish on my shelves for want of proper weaponry.
- Corrected forward bottom fuselage (Part No 38) for the 1/32 Revell Beaufighter.
- 1/48 scale Type 99 20 mm tail cannon for the Tamiya Betty. The one in the kit is hopeless.
- 1/48 scale Japanese Type 92 7.7 mm Lewis type gun with 'deep dish' pan magazine (I think these held 97 rounds).
- A line of antenna masts in brass or other solid material (3-D, not photo-etched). I use fine wire for antennas that must be placed in tension to look right. Long plastic masts, as on the Brewster F2A Buffalo and the TBD Devastator, just do not work.

Wilmer E Windham
Polson, Montana, USA

Any of you aftermarket producers care to address Mr Windham's needs? Ed.

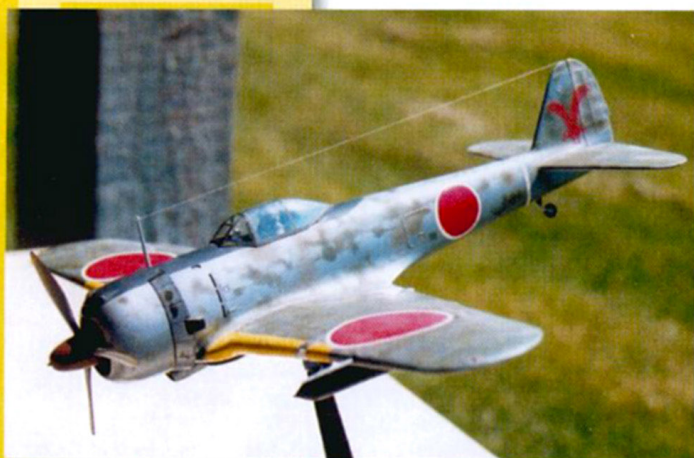
Taking the plunge

Attached is an extract from *Aircraft Recognition — The Inter-Services Journal* of May 1943 that had an article about making solid wood models as a useful way to learn aircraft recognition for pilots, air gunners, the Navy and Army. This paragraph 'Hints for Modellers', regarding cockpit canopies, may be of interest to SAMI readers, showing how important a canopy has always been for the finished effect.

"Cockpit covers are another bugbear, and many a good model is spoiled by attempts to construct them out of the solid wood, and paint them silver or blue. A better method is as follows. Make a solid wooden die the shape of the cover. In a piece of thin board or ply cut a hole about a quarter of an inch larger all round than the cover. Next take a piece of thin transparent plastic material such as 'Celastic' and pin it over the hole in the ply with drawing pins. Heat gently in front of a fire until a fine smoke is given off, then carefully press the solid die, on the end of a small dowel or stiff wire, into the hole. The material will then take up the shape of the cover. Allow it to cool and trim off the surplus to fit the cockpit neatly."

Clive Duckworth
via email

Plunge-forming canopies thus from transparent sheet is indeed an old technique, still practised (your Managing Editor has the scorched fingertips and heaps of distorted acetate rejects to prove it), now perhaps eclipsed by more sophisticated vacforming. Ed.



Nakajima Ki-43 Hayabusa (Oscar) by reader Wilmer E Windham

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04727 Hawker Hunter F6, 1:32

A Genuine Legend

The Hawker Hunter F6

The Hawker Hunter is still one of the most elegant jet fighters ever to have been developed, a genuine legend. It went into service in large numbers with the Royal Air Force from 1954 onwards and became a popular aircraft with many aerobatics units.

The prototype flew for the first time in 1951 and two years later set the world speed record. Known for its simplicity of operation and its stable flying characteristics, the Hunter became a favourite of every pilot who has ever flown it. About 2,000 Hunters

have been built; they were in active service with 18 different air forces.

Although the F6 version was essentially designed as a fighter interceptor, it could also carry bombs and up to 16 guided missiles. Some of the Dutch F6's also received AIM-9B Sidewinder missiles that were carried on external pylons. Most of the Hunter F6's were used by squadrons stationed in Great Britain, but by 1957 RAF squadrons in Germany and some other units in the near and far east also operated them.

Many Hunters were exported or manufactured under licence, under which system the Belgian and Dutch air forces were two of the main NATO users. The last Hunter did not go out of service until December 1994, a splendid tribute to the capabilities of this magnificent aircraft.

For more information on this 1:32 model kit featuring brand new parts as well as the complete range of Revell products log on to www.revell.eu



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